SHELF

No. 4449.a.23

MEMOIRS

AND

SELECT PAPERS

OF

HORACE B. MORSE, A.B.

OF HAVERHILL, N. H.

WHO WAS DROWNED NEAR PORTSMOUTH HARBOUR,

JUNE 22, 1825.

BY CHARLES BURROUGHS.

Hast thou the vigour of thy youth? an eye
That beams delight? a heart untaught to sigh?
Yet fear. Youth, oft times healthful and at ease,
Anticipates a day it never sees;
And many a death, like this, does cry aloud
Prepare, prepare thee for an early shroud.—*Cowper.*

PORTSMOUTH, N.H.
PRINTED BY MILLER AND BREWSTER.
1829.

4449 95299
Added by ex. July 7. 1869

District of New-Hampshire—to wit,
District Clerk's Office.

BE it remembered, that on the fourth day of December, A.D. 1828, and in the fifty-third year of the Independence of the United States of America, T. H. Miller, of Portsmouth, in the said District, has deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor in the words following, to wit:

"Memoirs and Select Papers of Horace B. Morse, A.B. of Haverhill, N.H. who was drowned near Portsmouth Harbour, June 22d, 1825. By Charles Burroughs.

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That beams delight? a heart untaught to sigh?
Yet fear: Youth, oft times healthful and at ease,
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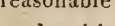
In conformity to an act of the congress of the United States, entitled "An act for the encouragement of learning by securing the copies of maps, charts and books to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned;" And also to an act, entitled "an act supplementary to an act entitled an act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts and books to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned, and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving and etching historical and other prints."

CHARLES W. CUTTER, *Clerk of the District of N.H.*

A true copy. Attest.

CHARLES W. CUTTER, *Clerk.*

PREFACE.



It may seem unreasonable and unnecessary to publish the memoir and writings of one, who perished in early youth, was little known, and was undistinguished by eminent talents, attainments, or any unusual incidents in his life. But, notwithstanding these circumstances, it appears to me, that there are satisfactory reasons for publishing this volume. I was intimately acquainted with the subject of it, and sincerely regarded the qualities both of his head and heart, deeply lamented his death, and felt the liveliest sorrow for the calamity of his bereaved parents. Under the influence of these feelings, I visited them in the autumn after their affliction, to converse about their severe bereavement, and offer them some kindly solace. Most earnestly then did they solicit me to take their son's papers, arrange them for publication, and annex a sketch of his life. I felt myself unable to resist their entreaties, especially as they were at that time enforced by many affecting incidents; and, as it occurred to me, that a compliance with their wishes might possibly be attended with their pecuniary advantage. On examination of the papers, which they placed in my hands, I hardly dared apprehend that they would awaken sufficient interest to ensure

much profit from them; and have deemed it expedient to delay their publication, till a sufficient subscription should warrant it. As this has just been effected, and as profits are likely to accrue from the sale of the work, all of which will go to the parents of the subject of this memoir, I can no longer withhold it from the public.

There is another consideration, which encourages me to publish this work. It exhibits an instance of early, ardent, unfeigned and exemplary piety; a trait that secured to its possessor the divine blessing, the love of his friends, and that, we trust, has gained for him, through the blood of Christ, an inheritance in the kingdom of heaven. It is not possible that such an example can be without some serious influence, particularly as it is urged home by the touching eloquence of an awful and sudden death.

Let it be understood, that in compiling this volume I have no object whatever of a sectarian character. I renounce all design of advancing or opposing any particular creed. I make this statement to defend myself against any unkind censures, to which I may be exposed, respecting the religious opinions of the subject of this work. His parents are Methodists, and he was himself brought up in habits of attachment to this denomination of Christians. Several of his letters, written during his residence in this

town, relate to this subject, and seem to indicate his intention to have been a Methodist preacher. In publishing these letters, it is but justice to suggest certain considerations, connected with them.— While a student at Dartmouth, and while superintending the academy in this town, he was in each place a regular communicant of what is termed an orthodox Congregational church, and was such at the time of his decease. Nor did he ever intimate to his pastor here any disposition to relinquish that communion.

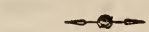
It is true that, shortly before his departure from this sublunary scene, his mind was extremely agitated and anxious about the denomination of Christians, to which he should attach himself, and about what ministerial path he should pursue. An impatience to commence preaching as soon as possible, his early religious preferences, and the power of parental example and influence and attachment, strongly prompted him to an immediate course of itinerancy, as a Methodist preacher. Other powerful considerations caused him to waver; and the conflict was evidently severe. Yet we see no reason to believe that his mind underwent any actual decision on the question; and it was his own explicit declaration at that time, that he should hold himself undecided, till he should have made a full and thorough examination. We learn moreover,

that in the midst of this mental conflict he signified his readiness to accept a tutorship in Dartmouth College. He was accordingly nominated to that office; and nothing was wanting to his appointment, but his written acceptance, which the sudden summons of death prevented. Hence we may reasonably infer that he had not *then* resolved upon adhesion to his early and hereditary religious tenets, otherwise he would not have sought an office at Hanover, an office which he was requested to retain for two years. It is therefore my full impression, which several other incidents confirm, that at the time of his decease he had never resolved to what religious denomination he would belong.

But, as connected with this work, it is a matter of no consequence in what way he might or would have determined this point. The value of his life to the public is not founded on any peculiarity in his creed or his speculations, but on his practical holiness, and on the powerful religious incentive, which his example furnishes to persons of every denomination, to remember their Creator in the days of their youth.

With these views I give this book to the world; and I commend it to God, with the earnest prayer, that it may be read with candour, advance the divine glory, and cause many to know and feel the necessity, beauty and rewards of holiness.

MEMOIRS.



The world abounds with the narratives of persons, who have betrayed extraordinary genius, or have developed uncommon powers amidst surprising incidents, or have filled with renown some of the most eminent stations of public life. These affect the mind with all the enchantment of romance. Few however can be morally benefited by such examples, as few are similarly circumstanced.—That biography is the most likely to prove beneficial in a moral point of view, where the individual portrayed is represented with a mind and temper, with circumstances and trials like our own; where the tenour of his life is not uncommon; where his opportunities and advantages are such, as we enjoy; where, amidst usual temptations, he rises superior to the power of sin; and where, guided by such wisdom as all may obtain, he exhibits the majesty of virtue. Such biography may afford but little interest to the world at large, but it is the most de-

cidedly useful kind, that can be set before us. Our most important concern is not to be great in the sight of men, but good in the sight of God; and the most effectual admonitions to goodness will often be found in the narratives of persons of humble rank in life, and of moderate powers of mind. The simplest, plainest lessons of morality are among the most valuable. Under these impressions we trust that the following memoir of "a youth to fortune and to fame unknown," will not be unprofitable, though it contain only a simple exhibition of genuine piety.

It must be readily admitted by all, that the exhibition of such piety is the most beautiful and instructive commentary upon the christian religion. Though differences of opinion may exist respecting the evidences or the doctrines of the gospel, yet all must acknowledge that a holy life has a vast influence on sincere believers, and is conducive to true peace and the most exalted virtue. Whatever may be the age or condition of persons, by whom the power of religion is felt, their history always exhales a grateful moral fragrance, and throws new splendour over the doctrines of the cross. Even the most obscure individual, who has lived in devotion to his Saviour, gives conclusive and encouraging proof how much that Saviour can do

for his soul, and utters a persuasive lecture to his limited circle. When a young man, amidst the temptations of the world, with a vigorous constitution and ardent passions, submits himself to Christ, his whole character assumes a perfect loveliness, and presents an unanswerable argument for the blessedness of his faith. Such a youth, however humble his talent, or condition, lives not in vain. He is a guide, a treasure, and a blessing to many. He wastes not his "sweetness on the desert air," but diffuses it, though unperceived, over society. He disarms the unbeliever of his sneers against the gospel, cheers many a christian bosom, is a theme of gratitude and praise for the faithful, and brings glory to his Redeemer. Such we believe to be the tendency of the character of Horace Bassett Morse.

He was born in Haverhill, Grafton county, New-Hampshire, March 18th, A. D. 1804. His parents, respectable for their piety and worth, are still living in Haverhill; and to their devotional example and habits are mostly to be ascribed the holy feelings, that characterised the soul of their departed son. His father, Mr. Bryan Morse, is a mechanic, and devotes himself attentively to his business, as a wheelwright and blacksmith. From childhood he has manifested a lively interest in religion, and

was at an early age attached to the doctrines and discipline of Methodism. When about twenty-eight years of age he became a Methodist preacher. He has continued ever since in the discharge of the duties of that office, and also pursues regularly his mechanical employments. He is, what is termed, a local preacher, being exempted from the obligations of itinerancy, and seldom fails to officiate every Sunday in Haverhill, or some of the neighbouring towns. He has several children, the eldest of whom is now a student in Dartmouth College. The first born, the pious Horace, "is not." A mysterious providence has summoned him home. His parents still mourn their bereavement in bitterness of soul; yet are not insensible to the rich solace, derived from the gospel of Christ, the faith and virtue of their lost, exemplary child, and the precious memory, in which his name is embalmed.

It cannot be doubted that, in some instances, God sets apart persons, even from their birth, to be subjects of his grace and instruments of his glory. Their minds are scarcely opened to the things around them, before they discern the divine hand, and open their hearts to his spiritual influences and paternal love. Horace B. Morse seemed to be one of these favoured subjects of grace. The

spirit of true religion very early took possession of him, and diffused over his character its gentleness and sweetness. So eminent were the docility and loveliness of his temper, that we are almost inclined to admit a predictive meaning to his mother's dream before his birth, when she saw him in the shape and innocency of a lamb. Beside this unusual gentleness, that marked his childhood ; his great reverence and warm affection for his parents ; his habitual obedience; and a tenderness of heart, that made him feel only grief but never resentment, at an injury done to him ;—besides these traits, he, at the earliest period, betrayed indications of piety, and a very ardent desire to become a child of Jesus.

When about six years of age, he was once observed to be crying, and apparently to be suffering from severe trouble. His mother asked him the cause of his grief. He said that he had been in his chamber, and trying to pray, and was distressed that he could not pray, as he wished. On another occasion, when reading the Bible, he suddenly burst into tears, and said that it greatly affected him to read that God should have called to Samuel, when he was only a child. Such incidents show how early his mind was impressed with serious things.

His mother relates an interesting story of his childhood, which evinces how readily and faithfully his will and feelings were subjected to parental authority. So straitened were the circumstances of the family of Mr. Morse about this period, that they were obliged to be indebted to the aid of the liberal. A certain friend, touched with the kindest feelings, then took Horace into his house, gave him his board, assisted him in his education, and expected in return only such little services, as the child could in his leisure hours render, as a domestic. It became necessary that he should eat at a table alone, and after the other domestics had finished their meals. This arrangement so deeply wounded his feelings, that he left the house of his benefactor, went crying home to his mother, and expressed his determination never more to submit to such treatment. Maternal expostulations and reproofs however, instantly melted his temper.—He cheerfully obeyed the order to return to the house of his kind friend, never again murmured at the treatment which he received, and sacrificed every evil feeling to the sense of filial duty. Some years afterward, when he spoke of this incident, he told his mother that her indulgence on that occasion would probably have resulted in the complete abandonment of his studies forever. How

beautiful an instance was this of filial obedience, of reverence for parental judgment and authority; and how generous and grateful was his acknowledgment of maternal faithfulness. Deep and beneficial should be the impression of such an example on the youthful mind.

Horace was about eleven years of age, when he thus became a sort of domestic in the family, to which we have alluded. Stern necessity compelled his father to submit to such a course; as he was at that time obliged to give up all his effects to his creditors. It pleased heaven to soften the severity of such trials and convert them to blessings; for these were the very means, by which Horace's character was made known, his worth developed, and a lively sympathy kindled in his favour. The very individual, who took him as a domestic, sent him to an excellent Academy in Haverhill; assisted in defraying his expenses; became strongly attached to him; felt a deep interest in his intellectual and religious improvement; was the means of having him sent to College; and continued his friendship and affection, till the object of them was removed from this earthly scene. After Horace had lived in the family of this benefactor about a year, his father, partially relieved from his pecuniary embarrassment, and needing the society and services of his child, took him home. But his son had now

tasted too much of the delights of knowledge to be willing to abandon it for any laborious or mechanical employment; and, notwithstanding the necessities of his family, Horace was determined to press forward for the attainment of learning. He struggled so hard with poverty, that he was willing to perform any severe or humble service, to gratify his love of instruction. It was usual at the Academy in his native town, to allow tuition, as a compensation to the person, who had the charge of ringing the bell. Horace fortunately succeeded in obtaining this privilege. It was however no small trouble to him, as he was obliged to ring the bell every morning at six o'clock, throughout the year, Sundays and vacations excepted. But this helped him much in his education. Such were his gentleness and goodness, that he was ever finding friends and obtaining contributions from various quarters, and was enabled, at fifteen years of age, to complete the studies, requisite for his admission into an University.

At this age, in the month of August, A. D, 1819, he entered the Freshman class at Dartmouth College. Notwithstanding his delight from the accomplishment of his wishes in finding himself a member of that excellent seminary, it was a delight, that was mingled with various painful forebodings. There were many clouds, that darkened his prospects and depressed his spirits. There was some-

thing so disheartening in the pecuniary difficulties, with which he must necessarily contend in his collegiate course, that the step, which he had taken, seemed unpardonable rashness, and filled him with alarm. Pennyless, friendless, and among strangers, he was about to subject himself to heavy expenses for board and education, without conceiving the possibility of their ever being defrayed. But he looked with submission and confidence to the only source, from whence comfort can come, and was not disappointed. Providence supplied his wants, cheered his mind, showed him a bright path through the stormy desert, raised him up friends, and poured on him every necessary benediction.—Horace's active mind and humble spirit soon suggested various ways of providing himself with pecuniary resources. During the long winter vacations he always took charge of some school. For about half a year he taught penmanship at the Moore's Charity School in Hanover. Two years of his college life he served, as a domestic, in his different boarding houses. His father contributed what he could to provide him with clothes.—Besides, he was much relieved amidst his exigencies at Hanover, by the generosity of friends; by the members of the bar, when the court was in session in Grafton County; and by a female charitable society in his native town. Such instances of

beneficence came, like a cordial over his spirits; and thus eloquently approved the conduct of those, who impart their charities for the education of the poor, who are pious, and intelligent. But his laborious services, strict frugality, and the generous aid, which he received, could not extricate him from debt; and he owed, on leaving college, to the amount of nearly two hundred dollars. Nor can it be ascertained that he ever in any instance subjected himself to an unnecessary expense. Amidst all these difficulties, he established for himself at college a high reputation for literary and moral excellence, and commanded the respect and regard of all who knew him. "His talents," writes Professor Hadduck, "were universally esteemed good; his diligence was extraordinary; his acquisitions were solid and very considerable. There was, considering his age, an uncommon manliness of purpose, principle and feeling, displayed through his whole character and conduct. In no young man, do I recollect to have seen a more uniform developement of all the traits, which go to form a useful, dignified and amiable member of society. His character for virtue, sincerity and piety, was without reproach. If not earnest and active in religion beyond all, he was certainly behind few. His rank in the class was a good deal above the middle. In attention to the duties of his class and

of college, he was singularly punctual; and, in his whole intercourse with the officers of college; and, so far as I know, with all others, commanded respect and esteem. His pecuniary circumstances being embarrassing, he evinced his resolute pursuit of a liberal education, by condescensions and sacrifices, to which none but a mind of intrinsick nobleness would have submitted. During some part of his college course, he did the duties of a servant boy in a country family,—different duties from those of a serving boy in large towns, less menial, but humiliating enough to a young ambitious student." How excellent must have been the character and conduct of Horace at College, to have elicited from this pious and learned professor, so high an eulogy.

But, however respectable were Mr. Morse's intellectual attainments and standing as a scholar, there was another more prominent and interesting feature of his character, that particularly distinguished him, while a student at Hanover. This was his piety, which was ever with him a sentiment, a principle, and a habit, and was always alive and strong. It was his repeated assertion, that the impressions, made on his mind, while a child, by the religious instruction of his parents, were so firmly fixed, that he had never been able to remove them. What an encouragement is this to parental

faithfulness in the pious care of their offspring! No one can doubt of the force of early impressions; and this shows what an obligation rests upon all parents, to let the first lessons to their children, be the fear and love of God, and their first prayers for them, be prayers for divine grace. It was the remark of an eloquent and eminently holy divine, "that he was blessed with a mother, whom he might account, without filial vanity or partiality, one of the most eminent saints, he ever knew upon earth; that he was indeed the son of prayer; that this early dedication had always been a strong inducement to him to devote himself to God by his own personal act; and that the most important blessings of his life he had looked upon, as immediate answers to the prayers of a pious mother." So was Horace disposed to make full acknowledgments to his parents for his serious impressions.

After he had been in college a little more than a year, some new and stronger impulse was given to his faith; and the Holy Spirit operated upon him with more enlivening influence. The state of his mind at that time, is fully developed in his journal, dated Dartmouth College, 1821, when he had scarcely completed his seventeenth year.

Feb. 27.—I now determine, with God's assistance, to keep a journal, and at the close of each day to reflect upon my conduct for the day, and

mention the state of my feelings; and may God in mercy assist me to be faithful with myself, and so live each day, that I can look back with pleasure and not with sorrow.

Feb. 28.—I have this day given way to my besetting sin, and have not felt the presence of God, as I ought. Oh that I may be led to place my heart and reliance upon Him, who is powerful to save, who can make the weak strong, and who can enable me to overcome temptation, and to feel that I am constantly in his presence. May God enable me to read his word, till my greatest enjoyment shall be in that duty; and to pray, till I shall delight in that service.

March 1.—How much reason have I to lament my coldness and indifference in the cause of God. Oh, that I felt that love and zeal, which ought to animate the soul of every disciple of Christ. Will God enable me for his dear Son's sake, to love him more, and serve him better than I have ever yet done? May I realise the worth of souls and so conduct myself, that others, seeing my good works, shall glorify my Father in heaven.

Saturday, March 2d.—I have now closed another week—drawn one week nearer to eternity: let me now inquire, whether I am any more prepared for death, than at the beginning of the week. What good have I done this week, which is past. What

progress have I made in my christian course. O may I be faithful and strict with myself; and will God in mercy enlighten my mind.

Sabbath, March 3d.—Truly I can say, "a day spent in the house of the Lord, is better than a thousand in the tents of wickedness." Yet how little do I realize the worth of souls—how careless am I of the glory of God. O may I be enabled to see my duty and to perform it aright.

Monday 4th.—I have this evening enjoyed the privilege of meeting with my fellow students, and joining with them in the worship of God. O may I be enabled to improve such privileges, as I ought; and I pray that God would warm my heart with more love to him, that he would enable me to be faithful, and to do all the duties, which are incumbent upon me, in an acceptable manner.

Tuesday 5th.—I have this evening heard of the sudden death of my classmate Mr. C. who was sick but six days and died of the lung-fever. He was an amiable and promising young man, and I trust has left this world for a better. His sudden departure is a loud call to myself and his classmates and acquaintances, to be likewise ready. And I pray, that it may be the means, through the blessing of God, of awakening christians and animating them in duty, and that it may be also blessed to impenitent sinners, and be the means of leading them to

serious reflections. And Oh! may it be blessed to me; may I be grateful that I am spared; and may I be led to reflect, whether I also am prepared. Oh! will God assist me to examine myself, and to determine the important inquiry.

Wednesday evening, March 6th.—God has mercifully preserved my life this day, and placed me in many circumstances of enjoyment. May I be grateful and love him with all my heart, and serve him with all my might, mind and strength. Wilt thou, O my God, point out plainly to me the path of duty, and enable me to perform it faithfully.

Thursday evening, March 7th.—Bless God, Oh my soul, and praise him for his goodness and mercy, which "endureth forever." Oh may I be grateful to God, that he has enabled me this day, in some measure, to do my duty. May he still continue to assist and bless all exertions, which are made for the prosperity of Zion. Oh, may the good work commence anew and prosper in this place, and may christians be engaged and faithful, and sinners be enquiring anxiously, "What they shall do to be saved?"

Soon after Mr. Morse had commenced this excellent practice of keeping a journal, which gave him a better insight into his own heart, and made him see and feel the greater necessity of reliance on divine grace and of growth in holiness, there

was an unusual interest manifested on religious subjects among the students at Hanover. It was then that he felt more effectually the power of the Gospel, and wished to dedicate himself to his Redeemer. The account of his religious feeling and convictions at that time, we give in his own language, of the date of June, 1822.

"In the Summer term of 1821, although my feelings were frequently in some measure excited by the affectionate addresses of my classmates, and fellow students upon the subject of religion, yet I never was under an abiding concern of mind, till about the 1st of July, when, from conversation with one of my classmates, I resolved to think something about religion, and seriously to attend to it. I continued for three or four days reading and praying for most of the time; but still I seemed fixed the same as at first. I could not realize my sinfulness, could not feel my ingratitude. Sometimes I was ready to give up, thinking that the present was not the time to repent, but that some future period would be better. Again I was resolved to persevere. My mind changed in this way many times, till finally I went on. I was shown my ingratitude in living so long in a total neglect of that Saviour, who had given his life to save me. Under a view of my guilt and sin, I hope and trust I felt true repentance and sorrow of heart. Not that I felt a fear of hell

and future punishment, for at this time, I do not know that the idea of hell entered my thoughts. But I think, I was sorrowful, that I had offended my Maker and Saviour so much by my life and conduct. I felt more peace with God, than I ever had done, took more delight in prayer, went and conversed with christians, and told them my feelings and my hope. Still I doubted very much, because I had not experienced that agony and despair in view of my sins, which I expected; and did not feel so much joy in believing, as many had expressed. On the same day my mind was in dreadful darkness, and I was as miserable, as I ever had been, till I went into a lonely place and prayed fervently; and God seemed to hear my prayer and dispel the darkness."

As it may naturally be supposed, his religious obligations now seemed to absorb his whole soul, and formed the predominant theme of all his letters. They so strikingly develope his feelings and character, and are such a beautiful exhibition of youthful piety and deep concern about "the one thing needful," that I shall here add copious extracts from a series of them, written while at College.

July 10, 1821.—*Dear Father,*—You wish to know the state of my mind with respect to religion. It is a week ago, last Sabbath, since I felt disposed to consider the subject. Since that time, my

feelings have been very different at different times. Sometimes I have been strongly tempted to let go the plough, and go back; at other times I have been determined, with the assistance of God, to persevere. It was at meeting, last Saturday evening, that I first saw, in a measure, my own ingratitude to God, and the reasonableness of his requiring that we should love him. I thought, after the services, that I was really sorry for my sins of ingratitude, pride, self-will and wickedness against so good and just a God, and thought I was willing to give myself up entirely to him, to do with me as he saw fit. Since that time I have felt differently. I have looked at my sins, and had a secret confidence that God had forgiven them.

But this, I am led to fear, is the suggestion of the evil one, to lull me into security. I have not had that contrition for sin, which I expected to feel, and wanted to feel; and I have to day, some of the time, felt miserably. I have felt in the dark; I could not tell whether I really had any hope or not, or had gone back many degrees worse than ever I was before. I have been this forenoon almost in despair, and prayed God earnestly, that he would enlighten me, and not suffer me to build upon a false foundation, my hope of eternal happiness; and that he would make me feel constantly, that my strength was in him alone. After that, I felt

much better, but since then I have felt considerably in the dark, and very much doubt whether my sins are forgiven or not. If I find that I have built upon the sand, I shall pray to God that he will give me a hope like an anchor, sure and stedfast.

July 30, 1821.—*Dear Father,*—You tell me to try myself with the following questions. Do I love God? To this question I would answer, I think I do. To the next question, What do I love him for? I answer, that it is partly because he loved me and died for me; but I think I love him also for what he is, in and of himself, that he is supreme, that he is perfectly holy, just and good and merciful. I think also, as far as I know myself, that I love his service, and to obey his will; that I am willing to give myself entirely to his service. Yet at times I feel gloomy, and my mind is in the dark. At other times, I feel a joy in contemplating the character of God. Sometimes I feel a confidence that God has forgiven me; at other times I doubt it.

Sept. 25, 1821.—*Dear Brother,*—I cannot omit the present favourable opportunity of writing you, and showing you the regard, which I have to your temporal and eternal happiness, by urging you to accept of those terms of mercy, which Christ, your Saviour and my Saviour, offers. Think for a moment of the unbounded love of Christ, manifested towards you, and see your ingratitude. He has

come down from heaven, where He was perfectly happy, and where He was worshipped by angels and archangels, and before whom Cherubim and Seraphim vailed their faces, has visited this earth, his polluted footstool, and suffered the greatest contempt and the greatest misery and agony, to save you and me, and the whole world, from eternal and inevitable misery and pain and anguish. Is not this enough to gain our love, and insure our gratitude? But this is not all: although we continue to reject his offers of mercy, and to treat him with contempt and derision, yet he gives us innumerable blessings, and extends his protecting hand over us. It is through his mercy alone that we have lived, and do live. It is God, who provides us with food and clothing. It is God, our creator, our preserver, our saviour and bountiful benefactor, the Lord who made the earth and the heavens, who can stop our breath when he pleases, who *now* calls upon us to repent; and whom and whose calls and invitations, we despise and reject. It is our Saviour, who has died for us, who calls upon us in the most affectionate and tender manner, to come unto him and be saved. And now, will you still determine to reject these offers, to go on in sin and rebellion? O! do not. Stop before it is forever too late, and think seriously upon your danger. Sit down now and think, what would be

your condition, if you should die immediately. I hope and trust, that my peace is made with God, and that I am ready to meet death, the king of terrors, with resignation; and I feel happy that I can call God, my father. But I wish you to be also prepared. I wish to have reason to hope to meet you in heaven. But now there are many reasons to fear, I shall not. For God says, that his spirit shall not always strive with man, and life is very uncertain; you may die, and meet your doom before to-morrow morning.

This may be the last opportunity, that I shall have to address you; this may be the last affectionate warning which you will ever have from me.—Try and improve it; and may God bless it to your conversion "from the depths of sin and the bowels of iniquity." Read your Bible, and do not be ashamed to be seen reading it. Keep out of light company. I can tell you that if you once obtain the pearl of great price, you will enjoy more happiness in reading your Bible, than in light conversation and in light company.

March 8th, 1822.—*Dear Father,*—I will improve a favorable opportunity to let you know that I am well, and that I have been this afternoon to the house of mourning, and followed to the dark and silent grave, the remains of a youth of about my age. This is not the only providence, by which

we are warned "to be also ready;" as the inhabitants of this place, the government of College, the students, and particularly those of my class, have met with a great loss, in the death of my classmate C.

He was the first scholar in his class and in college, and the most amiable in disposition and manners of any person, I ever saw. He was eminent for his piety, and I trust is now happy in the presence of his Lord and Master. The class seemed as much affected upon hearing of his death, as they would have been to have lost a brother. And I sincerely pray that these providences of God may be the means of awakening christians and sinners in this place. I pray also that God will bless them to me, that I may be up and doing, and be engaged in the cause of God; that I may be ready to meet him at any time. We must all die, whether prepared or not. We are hastening to eternity; must soon meet before the bar of God, and there pass the solemn test. We see that youth is not secure; Mr. C. was but about 19 years of age. His sickness was but about six days. O may we all be prepared to leave this world upon the shortest notice; and that we may all appear before the throne of God at last, and there be united in celebrating the praises of God and the Lamb, is my sincere prayer.

August 11th, 1822.—I feel that if I was as much engaged in religion as I ought to be, I should be content and happy: but, I suffer my mind to be so engrossed with my studies during the week, that I am almost wholly unprepared for the duties of the Sabbath; and when I see my situation on a Sabbath morning, I feel unhappy. Such were my feelings this morning. But I have some courage yet to set out anew; and resolve, in the strength of God, to spend less time in study, and more in prayer and meditation and in the active service of God. But, when I think how frequently such resolutions are made and broken, I fear and tremble. I want, dear father, to live at the feet of Christ; to possess constantly that meek, humble, quiet spirit, which was in our Saviour. When I look back upon my christian course thus far, it seems to me that I have borne no good fruit, but that the balance of my influence has rather been on the side of the enemy of souls; and it is a terrible reflection. I trust I have, and I assure you I need, your prayers, that God would mercifully forgive me my sins, and strengthen my good resolutions, and support me under temptations; for all these blessings I shall have your most hearty prayers.

Oct. 5th, 1822.—*Dear Father*,—I say let men do their duty, and it is enough without puzzling their brains with disputes.

I hope that practical holiness will be my aim; that purity of heart, holiness of life and conversation, will be my pursuit. But I feel that I have been very deficient; I am conscious that I have neglected my duty too much; I trust I do and shall have your prayers for me, that I may be a whole-hearted christian, and that I may purify myself as Christ is pure. For John says, "And every man that has this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." It is the natural consequence of the true hope, which is an anchor to the soul, sure and stedfast. It seems that the true christian will of necessity grow in grace; because the more holiness, the more love; the more faith he has, the more fruitful and better qualified is he to perform religious duties. If this be the case, how many, it is to be feared, are deceiving themselves.

I connected myself with the Church here last Sabbath; dedicated myself, before men and angels, to the service of God. O that I might constantly keep in view the great end of my existence.

Oct. 13th, 1822.—*Dear Brother*,—I cannot neglect this opportunity of writing a few lines to you. I have heard lately that there was some prospect of an increase of religion in H., and I am very anxious, that you should belong to the number of those who shall forsake their sins and accept of the offers of mercy, and become the children of God. I have

heard you mention, that it seemed rather hard, that a person should be punished in eternal burnings for a little merriment here, or for the sins, which he commits in the short time, which he stays on earth. But, how is it in the common affairs of life? If a person sports on the edge of a precipice, he may fall down, and be crushed to pieces: here death is the consequence of merely a little carelessness. And again, merely the sin of drinking a little ardent spirit, and having a few merry times with others, does often bring upon such persons poverty, distress, anguish or remorse, misery and death; these are the consequences of merely a little indulgence in wine, and a little mirth. A love of the liquor is contracted; indulgence is allowed; till finally poverty, misery, and death ensue. Now, if such fatal consequences attend merely these things, where is the unreasonableness of the assertion of the Bible, that sinners shall depart into everlasting burnings, unless they repent and believe? You are told distinctly your danger and the way in which you may be preserved. If a blind person, after being told by many persons, that he was walking towards a precipice, down which he would inevitably be hurled, unless he should alter his course, should continue to walk forward, when in the full possession of his reason, would not all think it right that he should suffer the consequences of his folly? Would any blame God

for not preventing him from falling and killing himself? Now this is your true situation. The Bible tells you, Christians tell you, that the way, in which you are now walking, leadeth to eternal burnings; they tell you that you are, by sinning against Him, who supports you by the brittle thread of life, sporting over eternal misery. Would you, if you were drowning, and some person should rescue you from a watery grave, and should be supporting you from falling into the water, would you try to injure such a friend in such a situation? Now God supports your life; he keeps you by his Almighty power from sinking into hell. If he should stretch forth his hand and cut this slender thread of life, you must inevitably sink into everlasting misery, in your present situation. Now will you continue to sin against one, whose power supports you? He has declared, that sin is hateful to him, and that he is angry with sinners every day. Do you not fear that he may, in his anger, some day cut this brittle thread of life, and let you fall into the deeply yawning pit? But he is waiting to be merciful. Christ, who has died for you, extends his hands, pierced with the nails, to receive you. He affectionately invites you to come to him and be happy; will you spurn him from you? will you, by your conduct, defy his wrath and go on to sin against him? Then you rush with the blind

man towards the precipice; and you cannot blame God, if after so many warnings and invitations, he suffers you to perish at last. You cannot say, it is unjust. All he requires of you, you are able to do. And why will you not? Do you fear the sneers of ridicule? Do you fear that those about you will laugh at you? If you do, are you not very weak? Is it not degradation, and pusillanimity, to be prevented from doing what is right, because others will laugh at you? Suppose yourself in the company of robbers, would you at their request, go forward into the highway and rob and plunder, rather than they should laugh at you and call you coward? No, your mind is not capable of such meanness; you would tell them to laugh and to sneer and call you coward, but that the action, which they wished you to do, was base and cruel, and that you would not do it. Sinners tell you to sin, to crucify the Saviour afresh, and to open his bleeding wounds anew; and, if you become serious, they may laugh at you. But where is your independence, if you fear to do right, because they will sneer? Regard them not: repentance alone will save you; and let not the fear of the sneers of others, induce you to expose yourself longer to the wrath of an offended God. But you may, perhaps, be putting off repentance to a future period. But this is death. You are growing worse; there is

less probability of your being saved, each succeeding day, that you live in sin. I fear very much, that you will, before long, adopt Universalism, or some doctrine which will lull you asleep, till you fall into unbelief. Do seek religion now, while you are young. Youth is the time; and almost all, who become christians at all, obtain religion about your age. Do not longer trifle with your Maker. The Holy Spirit invites you to come to Christ; do not grieve it away. I can assure you, that the life of the christian is far happier, than that of him, who enjoys all the pleasures of the world; I know from experience: and although I have been often far away from God, yet I trust he has forgiven me; and I can assure you, that the nearer I live to God, the happier I am; and so you will say, if you ever become religious. Drive the world behind your back, and seek Christ. Write me on Thursday, and let me know your feelings. And I must now conclude with praying, that God may make this letter the means of doing you good.

Dec. 17th, 1822.—*Dear Father*,—When Mr. ——, tells me of the view he had of sin and his own guilt, I am led to fear that I have not had such views of my condemnation by the law, as to place my trust alone in the merits of Christ. But then again, I think, that the Lord has given me some light, and that I am to take heed to that, and press

on to know the Lord, until I shall know his going forth, prepared as the morning. It seems to me that I have seen my ingratitude, and been enabled to exercise true sorrow of heart for the returns which I have made to the love and infinite goodness of God.

Jan. 9th, 1823.—*Dear Father,*—Mrs. ——, at this moment lies near me, while I am writing, sick we fear unto death ; but, we trust, she is prepared for her departure. While seeing her, apparently near the confines of eternity, and manifesting so much solicitude for my welfare, and for the good improvement of my future life, I could not remain unaffected myself. I thought, God being my helper, I would try to serve him, and to devote to his service all that I have or am. When I considered that all the world lieth in wickedness, it seemed that Christians ought to go from place to place, crying with a loud voice, "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand."

I think I have lately seen more of the wickedness of my heart than ever. Every action of my life has been polluted with sin. I have been puffed up with pride, and sought for the honour of men, rather than the honour of God. I have basely neglected my duty and been ashamed of my Saviour. I have told you enough now, to make you believe, that I have no reason to hope that

I am a Christian. And I think so myself very often. I look forward and think, whether I am always to live as I have done. And certainly I can see nothing, which will prevent me from committing the worst sins, but the restraining grace of God. I cannot pray without his assistance, for to pray is to believe that you are heard, and will be answered. But this faith is the gift of God. And the only way that I can be strong, is to feel my dependance on God. I have, I am conscious, placed too much dependance upon my own exertions. But it is God, that worketh in us to will and to do well.

You advise me to spend much time in meditation and prayer, and assure me, that I shall be enlightened. I have begun this week to read the bible, and to make it my study; and I hope, and try to pray, that I may be led into the truth. The result of my search I shall hereafter communicate. I have thought it would be better to leave the subject of doctrine, till I had passed through college; but it is too important. I want to be so firmly established in opinion, as not to be shaken by every wind of doctrine; and I believe that the best way is to go to the bible.

March 4, 1823.—*Dear Brother,*—I rejoice that I have reason to hope that you have had true sorrow of heart, true repentance on account of your

sins—that I may hope that you now love God. If you are truly the child of God, how much reason have you to praise and glorify Him, that when you were his enemy, he called you to a sense of your situation. It would seem that a christian, with God, a merciful father, ready to assist him, to give every day the bread of life, to sustain him always by his spirit, should go on his way constantly rejoicing. But no doubt you have even by this time seen, that, if you have in truth enlisted under the banner of the cross, you have before you a warfare. You have to fight against your evil propensities, your passions, the world and the devil. The world is constantly holding out inducements to you to desert your standard. But I trust you know in whom your strength is. You have already seen, doubtless, that you can do nothing at all, but through Christ strengthening you. And he has said, "My grace is sufficient for you." Do not, therefore, cease to pray for his assistance. There is one propensity, which seems to be too natural to all our family, that is, we all seem to be very lively, disposed to light, trifling, and unprofitable conversation. This is my constantly besetting sin; my father has mentioned it. I recollect that he told you once that if you ever became a christian, you would find it very hard to govern your tongue. So it is with me. I never look back to see how I have spent

the day, without reflecting bitterly upon such light conversation. This you must pray against. Pray without ceasing. Such conversation with your associates will destroy your confidence, when you attempt to address them on religion. Be faithful in the discharge of every duty; take up the cross, and be not ashamed to confess Jesus before all men. I have understood, that the reformation seems to be on the decline. You must not be willing, that the spirit of God should leave you. Try to think of the worth, and the danger of immortal souls. If you have any doubts about any thing, or any darkness upon your mind, you must go to God, and the Bible. Pray to have the path of your duty plainly pointed out. Look into your heart and try to see more clearly its iniquity, that you may be humbled and abased in view of your sins. But I can tell what to do, better than I can do myself. Pray then for me.

The two following letters were written to Horace's earliest and best benefactors.

March 4th, 1823.—*Dear Friends*,—As I have an opportunity to send to Haverhill, I steal a few moments from my study to write to you, to whom, under the blessing of God, I feel indebted for the advantages, I have had and still possess, for improving my mind and fitting me for usefulness. And if, while I have been acquiring human knowl-

edge, and my mind has been enlarging, I have known any thing of that true wisdom, the "fruit of which is better than gold, or choice silver;" if I have indeed seen my own heart, and obtained an interest in the Redeemer; is not this greatest, most valuable of blessings, conferred in answer to the prayers of God's children? When I reflect upon what you have done for me, I can have no doubt that each favour, bestowed, is accompanied with prayers for me, that it might not be given in vain.

These prayers I feel that I still need; and I trust I have them. I think sometimes that I enjoy myself more in reading, and meditating upon the Bible and in devotional exercises, than ever I have done, or ever could do, in the pleasures of the world. I think I may say, I know I do. But my mind is so changeable; I have naturally such a lively disposition; and am so liable to join in light, unprofitable conversation; and seem to make so few, if any, advances in governing this propensity, that I often think that I am deceiving myself. My daily walk and conversation is very far from what is required of me: the temper of my heart is wrong.

April 5th, 1823.—*Dear Friends*,—I received with much pleasure your kind letter, and hope that your instructions and solicitude for me will not be in vain. The remarks of Scott, which you mentioned, I have read. They certainly contain much

to encourage the young convert. And I feel, that if I am indeed a christian, I am the weakest of all. I will tell you why I think so. One reason is that I am so changeable, so much disposed to levity. I see christians, who are always grave, without gloom; cheerful, but not light and trifling; uniformly the same; who never show any enthusiasm, but still feel deeply and constantly. Not so with me. Now I am all engaged; my feelings are excited; I can weep over my sins, my departure from God: but soon my studies will engross my attention; my trifling mind is led away, till my religious feelings seem to be all gone. If any one converses upon religion, I cannot say a word. If I attend a meeting, my mouth is shut; and I hardly dare to come to the throne of grace. The 20th hymn of the second book of Watts, applies very nearly to my case. Each night, when I look back upon the day, I resolve upon the following day to live nearer to God. But I fear such resolutions are made too much in my own strength. When I look upon myself and see how wholly defective I am, I can only encourage myself with the reflection, that his grace is sufficient to renew me throughout, and fit me for heaven.

April 18th, 1823.—*Dear Parents*,—I recollect a remark of Mr. —, which I think worthy of notice. He told the young convert never to try to go around

the cross, nor stand and look at it; for said he, the christian, who goes round the cross, is sure to lose his way and get into the dark, and thus lose all enjoyment. And he, who stops to look at it before taking it up, grows weaker; and the cross, in his view grows larger; and he is very likely to go round it at last. The only way is to go right forward and in the strength of the Lord take up every cross and faithfully discharge every duty; and then the christian will enjoy the smiles of his Heavenly Father.

I have no doubt of the truth of this statement. If we mean to be christians, I believe that we must go about the work immediately, with all our might. Give your whole heart to God. A half-way christian will not do. We must stand forth bold and decided on the side of our Redeemer. I hope you will never forget to pray that I may live, as you describe. The centurion, who prayed Christ to heal his sick servant, was heard. His prayer was answered. Why may not the prayers of parents for their children avail with the compassionate physician? I trust that your prayers have in some measure been answered, and that they will be still more fully regarded.

The religious state of Horace's mind, during the last part of his College life is fully shown in the following extracts from his journal.

March 11, 1822.—How depraved is the human heart. How weak and vain are all human resolutions without the assistance of the Divine Spirit. Oh that I could trust in the promises of God; that I could be faithful; that I could constantly be in a watchful and prayerful state of mind.

Sunday, March 17.—Lord increase my faith; may I be enabled to live this week, better than I ever yet have done. May I have a spirit of prayer, and be faithful and obedient to the dictates of duty. May I not yield to any evil passion; be kept, through great mercy, from sinning; and be enabled to give to God glory and honour and power and dominion forever.

March 18.—I have now lived eighteen years this day. May I now begin to live anew, and this be the era of a more useful existence.

April 2.—Although I began this day with prayer and meditation, yet I have not felt constantly the presence of God and have been too light in conversation; my mind has not been so solemn, as it should have been. May I have faith, which worketh by love and purifieth the heart.

April 19.—Why is it that I take no more enjoyment in religion? Because I have not the consolations of the Holy Spirit, nor the approbation of my conscience. What is the reason of this? I too much neglect prayer and meditation; and con-

sequently, have not God enough in my thoughts; rely too much on my own strength, and do not deny myself. Oh! that I could overcome this disposition to levity and vain conversation; and live a more godly life, continually trusting upon God, watching and praying. But, if this be my wish, why are not my prayers more fervent and frequent? Lord assist me to feel my helplessness and wants, and to trust in thee.

May 18th, 1823.—I am light and trifling; my mind is thus led from divine things and my duties are neglected; the cause of Christ is consequently injured; sinners are encouraged and the Holy Spirit is grieved from me. All my resolutions prove vain. I cannot govern my tongue. God alone can enable me to live soberly and godly. I pray for his assistance, for a constant sense of dependance on him. Lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from evil, for thine is the power.

June 15th, 1823.—My resolutions avail nothing. Temptation comes. A depraved imagination assists. We easily convince ourselves of the propriety of what we wish to do, and thus we are overcome. Repentance comes afterward. I find my mind is becoming more and more dissipated, and that I am growing less inclined to study. I must stop, return; and, if I have any energy of mind, exert it. But I believe without a shadow of doubt that my appe-

tites and sinful propensities will triumph over my mind, unless I receive divine assistance. I heartily despise my own weakness and childishness; others of my age manifest a manliness and decision, which I know enough to admire, but cannot imitate. Every wind turns me. Instead of conducting myself with soberness, my conversation is to the highest degree childish and unprofitable. Studies are neglected for nonsense. Unless I alter, I fear I never shall acquire a character, which will give me any influence or enable me to do any good. My fickleness increases. There is no stability nor decision in my character. But I believe that man has reason, which it is his duty to exercise. But it is always my fate to follow inclination rather than this guide. I see my danger of hereafter pursuing the same course. I have heretofore felt as strongly determined to alter my conduct and reform, as at the present time; but all such resolutions have as yet been fruitless. The Lord strengthen me, "lead me not into temptation, deliver me from all evil."

July, 1823.—My sense of divine things and of the solemn and important concerns of eternity is so much blunted, that the concerns of a moment, and the most trivial business occupy more of my attention and engage my feelings more, than the welfare of my immortal soul. I mock God with unmeaning forms of prayer or neglect it; profane

his sabbaths, and in one sense despise his ordinances; read his word without prayer and without interest, without feeling that it is the word of God, or without striving to make it the rule of my conduct. My conduct before the world, my neglect of duty, are such, as to dishonour God and my profession, encourage the sinner, and grieve the humble christian. It will not do so to live; this course certainly leads to misery. The Lord dispel this moral darkness from my mind and heart by the kindly beams of the sun of righteousness; strengthen and confirm my resolutions; and make me his in very truth.

These striking proofs of Mr. Morse's religious character show that his collegiate course had furnished him with the best of principles and holy feelings, and that he had gathered the most important wisdom to prepare him for entering on the world. That world was beginning to open upon him under different auspices. The period was arrived, when his academical studies were now completed. At the commencement of 1823, he took his Bachelor's degree at Dartmouth College, and had the honour of being appointed to deliver an English Oration. His subject was "The moral influence of the living English Poets." The oration was said to have been highly creditable to him for its intrinsic excellence and for the style of its delivery. That he had no

common merit, as a speaker, appears from the circumstance of his having been one of the successful competitors for the prizes, which are usually awarded to the best declaimers at a public exhibition, previous to commencement. A distinguished clergyman, who was present when Horace was graduated, has recently said "I then thought, and still think, that he was one of the most natural public speakers I ever heard; I almost coveted those gifts for the church, to which I belonged." That oration is inserted in this volume among Mr. Morse's select papers.

It happened that about this time the Trustees of the Academy in Portsmouth, N. H. were solicitous to obtain a well qualified instructer. They wrote to the President and some other officers of Dartmouth College to provide for them such a teacher. Mr. Morse was immediately and warmly recommended, secured the prompt and unanimous choice of the Trustees, and entered upon his duties the eighth of September, 1823. Such an appointment seemed a providential and merciful provision for him. Deeply in debt for expenses, necessarily incurred at Hanover; distressed by the penury of his own family; fond of study; desirous of devoting himself to one of the liberal professions; with the world before him, and not knowing which way to go; amidst such perplexities, nothing could have

been more cheering to his mind, than to have received the offer of so respectable an Academy with the promised compensation of six hundred dollars a year. New scenes, new duties were before him. To his duties he faithfully devoted himself, and suffered no temptations to weaken his faith or lessen his virtues. He rose superior to the fascinations of earthly pleasure, for his religion taught him in what true felicity consisted. Well did he regard the solemn admonition:

> Beware what earth calls happiness; beware
> All joys, but joys, that never can expire.
> Who builds on less than an immortal base,
> Fond, as he seems, condemns his joys to death.—*Young*.

His piety was too firmly established to be changed. His new situation, instead of rendering him more thoughtless and worldly, seemed to lead him to a severer inspection of his heart and a closer communion with heaven. This appears from a statement made to his parents, when he had been about a month in Portsmouth.

"I am aware," he says, "that you feel a solicitude respecting the situation, in which I am placed, not knowing what effect it may have upon my religious feelings. I do not know but I feel as much solicitude for my soul's welfare, as ever I did. I have been led to inquire of late, whether I ever have in truth given myself up to be Christ's

and not my own; whether I can sincerely say with Paul, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do"; whether I am willing to deny myself the indulgence of sinful inclination and to give up, if necessary, reputation, honour, wealth, &c. and be despised and persecuted for Christ: whether I am willing to be led unreservedly by his spirit and word, to go where, and when, and do what duty requires, let it be ever so crossing to my natural inclinations; and to seek my own reputation no farther than it is connected with the honour of God? I hope that I shall be willing to suffer, if necessary, 'afflictions with the people of God, rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.'" In another letter, written to his brother about a fortnight previous, he says "I want to know how you enjoy religion; whether you keep a conscience void of offence. Paul says there is no condemnation to those, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit; such have the approval of their own consciences. But you know how apt we are to make the dictates of conscience and reason yield to inclination and appetite. So it is with me. I resolve and re-resolve, and live almost the same. In judging of your own character do not compare yourself with those about you. Do not say, I am as good as they; but inquire, whether your conduct and feelings accord with those of the saints, exhibited in the Bible, and

with those of Christ. But read Edwards on the affections; read it attentively; do not fail to read it, if you neglect every thing else; he will tell you more, and better, than I can. After saying so much to you, I will turn to myself and say, 'Physician, heal thyself.' A beam is in my own eye. I know the right, yet follow the wrong way. But one thing more; I say with the pious author of the book, which I send you, "away with unprofitable controversies; spend your thoughts rather upon the momentous question, Am I sound, or am I rotten at heart?"

The duties of Mr. Morse's school now deeply engaged his attention; and it is well known among those who were acquainted with him, while at Portsmouth, that he proved a most able and faithful instructer. Though young, he had the talent of commanding respect and exercising the most perfect discipline, while he secured the warmest affection of the children under his care. Many trials and difficulties he found in his situation; but always knew how to overcome them, or to make a proper use of them. "I feel very much interested in my school," said he, "although my patience sometimes undergoes a very thorough trial. Such times however, are not frequent; and, I think, are becoming less so. The vexations, which I sometimes experience, and the impatience with which I bear them, bring

to my mind very forcibly, at times, the wonderful forbearance and patience, exercised towards us by our Creator, in constantly multiplying our blessings and comforts, notwithstanding the aggravating nature of our conduct, our disregard of his will, and forgetfulness of his laws and precepts, while we are at the same time acting in opposition to our own good and happiness. When I see conduct, like this, in my scholars, I sometimes feel grieved, and could cry with a good heart. But I endeavour, and I think with success, to convince them, that in all I do, I seek their best interest."

Shortly after his arrival in Portsmouth, he entered into his journal, the following reflections and resolutions. "I now, as very often before, feel the importance of forming habits of self-denial, and learning to give to reason the sway over inclination. The indulgence of appetite, I am aware, is inconsistent with that strength and exercise of the mind, which it is the duty and dignity of fallen man to cultivate. But

> Weak and irresolute is man!
> The purpose of to-day,
> Woven with pain into his plan,
> To-morrow rends away.

My helplessness I know and deplore, but cannot overcome. I feel that divine strength only will give my better part victory over sordid appetites and sluggish indolence. May the Lord grant that

henceforth, reason, conscience and his word may reign victorious over perverse inclinations and fleshly lusts. May such feelings, as I now have, not vanish, but increase.

While I would confess and feel that I am perfectly dependent upon divine grace to enable me to keep my resolutions, I do once more determine to avoid, as far as may be, idleness and light company; to divide my time systematically; and endeavour to be always profitably employed. In the morning, I must look to God in prayer, and reading his word for at least half an hour: after school, spend half an hour at noon, in study or calls; half an hour in exercise; half an hour for dinner; half an hour in the Athenæum: after school at night, till supper, spend in reflection, study, or visiting the poor; from supper till eight, study; eight to nine, visiting; nine to ten, reading the Bible or religious books; ten to eleven, study. Read this every morning."

With these resolutions, Mr. Morse very regularly complied. Feeling his great responsibleness as an instructer of youth, he became very assiduous in his duties, and laborious in his studies. His neglect of exercise added to severe diligence subjected him, in the beginning of the year 1824, to an attack of sickness, from which, however, it soon pleased God to raise him up. In a letter to his father, on

his recovery, he says, "I wish to tell you that I am, through the mercy of a kind God, restored to health. I am sensible, that I ought to be taught from this, my entire dependence upon that divine Being, who 'killeth, and and maketh alive, who bringeth low and lifteth up;' and I should be very grateful to him. When I look back upon my life, I am compelled to say 'that goodness and mercy have followed me all my days.' I have been blessed with friends to aid me; have succeeded in my own efforts; have suffered no severe afflictions or disappointments; but, in health and every way, have been prospered; and yet I have been unthankful, forgetful and wayward. May I have a heart to seek after, and value the 'pearl of great price,' more than all wealth, the favour of the world, reputation, fame, and every thing else."

I shall now insert, and arrange according to their dates, several of the most interesting letters, that were written by Mr. Morse, between the last mentioned date and the time of his decease. The first letter is a beautiful proof of filial solicitude and kindness, and must have afforded great solace to his father amidst severe embarrassments. The second letter is particularly affecting, as it relates to a calamity, similar to that unfortunate one, which numbered the subject of this memoir with the dead. How little could he have imagined, that the mysterious

dispensation, which so touched his sensibility, was to be his own destiny, and was to awaken in others the keenest sorrow for him ! One of the following letters was written to a distinguished Methodist clergyman, and contains Mr. Morse's views on the subject of Methodism ; a subject, about which, at that time, he was extremely anxious to obtain correct and settled opinions. He disclosed his views to a few friends, and once had a conversation about them with his pastor in this town, and of whose church he was a most valuable and active member. That conversation seems to have been of a speculative character, designed for eliciting information on points, that agitated his mind, rather than to express any determination about what course he should pursue. I therefore leave it to his own language to speak for him on this subject. The last letter in the coming series, dated at Concord, three weeks before his death, is, I am inclined to think, the last which he ever wrote. It shows how fully his heart was set on his Master's work, and in what vigilance he was found, when his Lord came. How happy was it for him, that the closing sentiments of that epistle dwelt so much upon his mind ! " It is a solemn thing," he said, " to have a life to spend, and to account for. It matters not how we get through life, if we be found in the path of duty, and are accepted at last."

March 10th, 1824.—*Dear Father*,—It is indeed a source of grief to me, that trouble and perplexity should so unceasingly rob you of comfort and happiness; and I am not surprised, that during so long a struggle with poverty, amidst so many and so long continued embarrassments, and after so many disappointed hopes, you should sometimes think upon your future earthly prospects with gloomy forebodings, and look around you, and be almost ready to say, "all things are against me." But it is not so. If all things seem to be against you in the *world*, it is not so in the bosom of your family. I have often thought, that, notwithstanding all your trials and perplexities, you were yet unacquainted with severe afflictions. What is poverty with all its attendant sufferings, compared with the loss of a near and dear relative? The rich often meet with the most heart-rending calamities, inflicting wounds, for which wealth and worldly prosperity can furnish no healing balm: bereaved perhaps of dear and promising children; or, what is worse, compelled to mourn over the ingratitude and profligacy of one, whom they had drawn close around their hearts, for whom they had fondly cherished the brightest prospects; one, who, instead of being a disgrace and curse, they had confidently expected should be an honour and solace to them. Such a blasting of one's dearest and most fondly

cherished hopes, is an affliction indeed. Ah, many are compelled to drink a cup inconceivably more bitter than yours.

Nor is futurity altogether veiled in darkness. The bright countenances of your children around you shed some light upon it. You may certainly feed upon hope. The prospect may grow, I trust, still brighter, as the scenes of future earthly existence may open themselves to view. "The darkest day, live till to-morrow, will have passed away."

March 21, 1824.—*Dear Friend,*—I am improving all the time, which I have, in studying Greek and Hebrew. I have no news, except the shipwreck of two vessels from this port, bound to New Orleans. A brig and a ship, with their crews, except five seamen, have been lost. It is a very sad loss indeed to this town. The crews were most of them young men from this place, who were not professed seamen; but, just beginning business, and on account of the dulness of the times they were induced to go to sea and try their fortunes. Active, industrious and enterprising, they set out of port with a new ship, and with as good hopes and prospects, as perhaps any have, who trust the inconstancy of the ocean. Such sweeps of death remind us, in a very striking manner, of the uncertainty of life, and of the consequent necessity of a constant preparation. I know not, my friend,

whether we shall ever have the pleasure of spending much time with each other on earth; but I hope, that however distantly we may be separated, we shall always be found in the path, which will bring us to the same home at last, where all friends will meet to be no more separated forever. We are both of us sufficiently acquainted with the world, to know, that we cannot expect happiness here. We find anxieties, trials, and difficulties thicken upon us, as we grow older; and we must expect it to be so, till death. Happy for us, if we are found faithful at last.

March 4th 1825.—*Dear Friend*,—How shall I write to you? Shall I tell you, that, notwithstanding a situation, so well calculated to make one contented and happy as mine is; notwithstanding the natural flow of high spirits which, you know, I used to have; I am often gloomy and discontented, and all the time unthankful. I will tell you how it is. I have seen life in many of its varieties. I have struggled with poverty, and been acquainted with the poor. I have known for a year past, what it is to have almost every want gratified; and I have associated with the wealthy and the honourable; and from all that I have known, and from what I can judge, I have a most thorough conviction, that the wise man said correctly, "all is vanity and vexation of spirit." I am persuaded fully, that the great

and rich are unhappy, unless their hopes rise above earth. I *think* that I have no ambition for fame or wealth. Perhaps it is only because I am not in immediate contact with the exciting causes of this passion. Yet I feel but little interest or animation in any thing, even study not excepted. There is so little variety, so much dull monotony in my school, that my feelings cannot be interested. Now all this breaking away of the affections from earthly objects would be well, if they were fixed where they should be. But no. I know that the hewing out of broken cisterns here is a fruitless, embittering labor. Still I am indisposed to go to the fountain of pure water. I hope that I may be driven there; that my desires and hopes may reach eternity. Every year convinces me more and more, and I presume it is so with you, that little happiness must be expected here.

April 14th, 1825.—*Dear Brother*,—My views, with regard to life, have within a year considerably altered. In College and for some time afterwards, notwithstanding I felt resolved to devote myself to the labour of the ministry, and felt some zeal in it; yet thoughts of my own comfort and reputation, obtruded themselves upon me. I had ambition; and secretly wished and determined, if possible, to be great. Now with regard to these things, my feelings are very much changed. Fame and wealth

I value of themselves not one straw. I am as thoroughly convinced, as though I had tried the experiment, that they cannot add to our happiness here or hereafter. I care no more what men may say of me, than I do for the whistling of the wind. What, you will say, occasioned this change of feelings? I answer, first, experience and observation have done much towards effecting it. I have, while I have been here, associated with men of wealth and fame, and been placed upon an equality with them. I have had food and clothing as rich, as the wealthy and great. All my wants have been supplied, and all my desires, of a personal nature, gratified. I have been treated with kindness and respect; and yet have not been happy. How would wealth improve my condition? Instead of having every thing I want, without care or anxiety, as I now do, I might have a house of my own, furnished in a sumptuous style, which must be taken care of by myself, which would occasion anxiety and vexation. Business would perplex and trouble me. No, no. My present situation is preferable to that. Fame could not furnish one real comfort. It is air; a bubble blown about by every wind, and broken by opposing breaths. Experience however is not all, that has convinced me. I have known those, who had all that I could aspire after on earth, miserably unhappy. Their joys are all hollow.

Discontent preys upon their hearts; and they almost loath life. Thus observation and experience have taught me to despise the world; and if there were no hereafter, I am satisfied that I should be miserable. In the second place, I have inquired anxiously and carefully into the evidences of Christianity, and have come to a thorough conviction of the understanding, that it is true. With this conviction, I have determined, with God's help, to cast the world behind me, and live like a rational creature. I consider it the height of folly for a man to believe any thing in religion, and then look for a treasure and happiness on earth, or care in the least what men say of him, provided he is satisfied that he does his duty. I hold to a man's acting, as he believes. You would call that man mad, who, after being satisfied that his house was on fire at midnight, should go up chamber to bed, without waking his family, or providing at all for his or their safety. Is it less madness, when a man is satisfied that there is a hell to shun, and a heaven to gain, to live, as though he and all about him were perfectly secure. My feelings are altogether different from what they have been. They are founded upon a conviction of the understanding, and have in consequence a living energy in them. My great and anxious inquiry now is, how shall I spend the years, which God may allot me on earth? What is the path of duty?

Ease, reputation, wealth, and every thing on earth I am, I believe, ready to give up. As soon as this question is settled, by God's help, I will act and it shall be settled by reason, conscience, and the Bible, not by inclination or worldly considerations. Here is where I now am. I must so determine, and so live, that, let my life close when it will, I shall be ready and willing. Now, how is it with you? I am afraid that you think too much of the world; that your views reach far into life, but not enough beyond it. You must not be content with merely preparing for usefulness, you must be useful, as far as possible, now. Think seriously what account you can give of your past life; and how to live, so as to give a good account of the years to come. The record of twenty years of your life will soon be closed. Of these twenty years you will be called to give an account. Is it not wisdom to think before hand what you can say of them? The recording angel is each day writing down your conduct and feelings. What shall he write about the rest of your life? What shall he write of the coming year? what of the next month, the next week? what of today or tomorrow? *You* may guide his hand. You may know each night what he has written of that day, and thus know how the account is to stand at the last day. Sit down and determine, in the view of eternity and in the pres-

duce of God, what you shall do with the next year. If God give you another year, he places it at your disposal, and you must account for it. With regard to your studies, you ought to ask what your duty is; whether, if God should call you while you are re-receiving an education, you could feel,as though you were found in the right place, and were ready to meet Him? You should anxiously inquire whether ten years of your life shall be spent in merely preparing for action? Every thing, that you do, should be referred to God. Our great sin in this life is, not asking what will please God, or answer the end of our existence, but—what will promote my interest or pleasure?

Lest you should suspect me of talking merely, and like the guide-board pointing out the way without moving a step myself, I will tell you something of what I am doing, and intend to do here. I visit considerably, as much as convenient,among the sick and poor in town; talk to them, and pray with them, and find a real satisfaction in it. I intend very soon to go to Newcastle, three miles distant, to establish a sunday school, and to talk to the people on the sabbath, because they have no preaching. My studies I pursue, as far as I have leisure; but now attend principally to the Bible and religious books. Yet I am no enthusiast or fanatick; have none of the sourness of the bigot; no

gloom or long-facedness, if I may so call it. I act no more from feeling than from principle, and am ready to give a reason to any one, who asks it, for all that I do. I think and act upon the subject of religion, as I would upon any important subject which interested me.

April 19th, 1825.—*Respected Brother F—.* I have concluded to consult you upon a question, which I consider the most important one to me, which will ever come before me. It is none other, than what shall be the course of my life. Since I saw you, my mind has been but little exercised upon the subjects, upon which we conversed; but it has been agitated with other more important questions. I have a settled and firm conviction of the dangerous situation of those, who are unrenewed, and consequently of almost all the world. This conviction inclined me to go forth like Whitfield and Wesley, preaching throughout the country, wherever I could get people to hear, and warning them of their danger. Convinced also of the utter vanity of the world, of fame, wealth, &c. my only inquiry now is, as far as I know myself, what is the path of duty? And I am strongly inclined, though not convinced about it, to think that I may be more useful as a Methodist preacher, and shall find fewer temptations to draw off my heart from God. In that situation, I should be obliged to give up noth-

ing, which I value, except perhaps social enjoyment, which together with the enjoyment of religion, form the only happiness, which I shall find on earth. I know not but I ought to give up society, lest I may be too much attached to an earthly comfort. Now I believe, I am ready to go right to work, as a Methodist minister, whenever I can be satisfied that this is the course of duty; and to commence labouring, whenever I shall be called by God in his providence. My circumstances are such now, that I think I must wait one year longer, before engaging in active duties; and have thought *that time* would be desirable to settle my mind upon many minor points of doctrine, and to study the Bible. If I study here, there is quite a field for usefulness. Now, I want to know in the first place, what I must do, if I should conclude that it was my duty to become an itinerant preacher. What kind of an examination, as to doctrine, must I pass? &c. Secondly, How much time should I have for study, while itinerating? Another question I have thought of, which does not interest me particularly now, but which may concern me perhaps hereafter, What do itinerant ministers do with their families? How are they supported, and how much are they with them?

I suppose that the minister, wherever he goes, if he finds Christians, will not consider himself among

strangers, but with brothers and sisters ; but my life has been so much secluded, and of consequence my intercourse with the world has been so small, that I have an unwillingness to be with strangers; and what I most fear in the deprivations of a Methodist minister, is, the want of intimate, refined friends, whose feelings would be congenial with mine on a great many points, in which piety alone does not instruct one. With uncultivated minds, all the feelings, in which I should sympathise, would be those upon religious subjects ; all conversation must almost necessarily, and I know not but properly, be confined to these subjects. With regard to this subject, *you* know more and can understand better, than most of your brethren.

I wish to know how often itinerant ministers preach ; and how far they ride usually in a day, while on their circuits ; whether they ever stop a day or two in a place, to visit from house to house. I have thought that I should like to go round the circuit with some preacher, in some vacation of my school, and thus become personally acquainted with the mode of conducting matters.

Perhaps you wish to know more of my feelings, with regard to my spiritual state. I sometimes think that I have no feelings which, with any conclusiveness, evidence a renewal of heart ; that my willingness to give up the world, to be poor and de-

spised by reason of devotion to the eternal interest of my fellow beings, my desire to be altogether devoted to this work, are nothing more than the natural effects of the conviction of the understanding, as to religious subjects; that it would be impossible for one really to believe as I do, and not feel disposed to act, as I would. Yet, I think my heart is not altogether destitute of love to God and to christians. I can pray with a kind of faith, which I have not known till lately; believing that God hears, as much as a friend hears, when I speak to him. My feelings are sometimes warm in thinking upon the work of the ministry; and I long to be engaged, as one would long to be released from a dungeon to pure air and gladdening light. *I am not, however, altogether satisfied as to the course which I am to pursue.*

Concord, June 2d, 1825.—*Dear Father.*—Perhaps I had better tell you first, that I have not come to Concord as a Representative of Portsmouth, or as a Senator, or any thing belonging to the General Court; but only because I knew not what better to do with three days vacation, than to get as near home as I could, and see as many old acquaintances as might be seen.

I am, by the way, at a great loss for materials to make up a letter. I believe, after the whole, I will tell you something of Newcastle, my parish, (it *is*

so to all intents and purposes.) Newcastle is an Island, connected with the main land by three several bridges. It contains about 800 inhabitants, all fishermen, who are absent generally in the summer. The houses are very old and shabby ; the sea-air and fogs have given them the appearance of being covered with a thin crust, like a kind of moss, by penetrating the wood and partially rotting it. The streets are full of fish skins, and fish bones, nets, and other fishing gear. The rocks and fields are covered with flakes for drying fish ; a vast quantity of fish is cured here every year. Fishing boats and vessels are found all around the island, except on the part, where the fort is situated, in which, by the way, is a garrison of forty or fifty men.

I have been over the island, into the most forbidding tabernacles of man, and drawn forth the wild, ragged children of ignorance and poverty ; have put the testament into the hands of those, who can read, and am instructing those, who cannot. I have, besides, a meeting on the Sabbath for the adults, who consort not with the Baptists. I talk to them from some passage of Scripture in the forenoon, and expound in the afternoon ; my expositions I get principally from Clark. The number who attend the meeting, increases weekly ; there are now, perhaps nearly an hundred ; and sixty or

seventy children attend the Sabbath school. I feel best satisfied while engaged in this business; there is something in it, which reaches beyond time, which takes hold of immortality; you feel as if you were *doing something*.

What I am to do in life, I know not. It is an important era, to which I have now arrived. It is a solemn thing to have a life to spend and to account for. It matters not how we get through this life, if we be found in the path of duty, and are accepted at last. *Affectionately yours*, HORACE.

It must appear to every reader, that a strain of ardent piety pervades the preceding letters. It is not however from these alone, that we infer Mr Morse's religious convictions and feelings. It is easy enough to make large professions and to betray in correspondence pious sentiments, that have never been felt. To judge of a man's heart, we must have opportunities of knowing what is passing in secret between God and himself; and what is the tenor of those sentiments, which he does not expect will meet the scrutiny of man. By this test we are enabled to ascertain the sincerity and genuineness of Mr Morse's piety. What passed between himself and that omniscient Being, who knoweth the secrets of all hearts, he occasionally committed to his journal, as the private record of his life: and little must he have apprehended that death would

have arrested him so suddenly, as to have subjected those private feelings of his heart to public exposure. In his journal then, we may read the honest, open dictates of his soul; dictates, which tell us that he devoutly conversed with God, and that his affections were set on things above. All this, I trust, has been satisfactorily shown; but must be more conclusively proved by the subsequent remaining extracts from his diary, written but a little while before his days were determined, before he had reached those bounds, that he could not pass.

March 18th, 1825.—This morning completes my twenty first year. Twenty one years of my life are gone. What account can I give of them? What is the fruit of them? All has, so far, been little subservient to the great object of my existence. It is five years next July, since I began to hope that my heart with regard to God and divine things was changed. That time has been almost altogether spent in forgetfulness of duty, or rather without any sufficiently pure devotion to God. In truth my life has been almost altogether barren of good works; but the years are gone and cannnot be recalled. The recording angel has closed the account of twenty one years of my life, and waits to see what he shall write hereafter; what of the year to come; what of the coming month; the coming week; what of to day. The record of the past cannot be favour-

able to me. I have certainly contracted a great debt, which cannot be paid. My hopes must rest not on merit, but most certainly on grace. If the debt be cancelled, I know it must be by gift. Would that I could be wise for the years which I may yet spend upon the earth. Would that I could live for immortality. Let me now reflect upon the way, which reason, conscience and the word of God point out for my future life; let me consider how my attainments may be made to further the great object of my existence; and may divine light shine into my mind.

April 3d.—Since the preceding date I have endeavored to keep in mind my accountableness, and have been enabled to act in some degree agreeably to that truth. I have considered my present situation, and looked at the future, to determine what my duty is for the year to come. I have, for a fortnight past, felt a strong bending of my mind and partly of my inclination to become a Methodist preacher. I am inclined sometimes to impute this to early impressions and prejudices; but am resolved to act only from the result of an enquiry, decided by reason and scripture. The only question with me is, in what situation I may be most useful; how I may best promote the object of my existence, which I believe to be the glory of God, my own and others eternal happiness.

Sabbath Morning, April 17.—Duties at present incumbent upon me. It is my duty in all, that I do, not to consult my own pleasure or interest, farther than is consistent with doing all I can do for the glory of God. 1st. As I am by providence placed in a school here, it is my duty to discharge faithfully and cheerfully all the labours, connected with this institution; to possess myself constantly in patience in school; and to do all, that I can, for the moral and intellectual culture of the minds under my instruction. I ask divine aid for discharging these duties. 2d. Placed as I am at the head of the Sabbath School, I am to do all that I can to promote the general interests of the school, and the spiritual welfare of the children, who compose it; by endeavouring to increase the numbers of the school; by addressing the scholars in a manner as impressive, as may be; and by visiting as much, as is consistent, among the parents. 3d. It is my duty to do good to all around me, and all within my reach, as far as possible. This may be done, by example and precept. My deportment should be such always, as becometh godliness. I should be guarded in my conversation, and be careful that it be such as to minister grace to the hearers. I should avoid every appearance of discontent and repining, and appear cheerful, kind and affectionate. 4th. I owe duties to myself. My leisure time

should be spent in profitable study, in increasing my knowledge of the scripture, of God and myself. Much time must be spent in prayer and reflection; reflection upon what has been done for me; upon the situation of mankind; and the duties imposed upon me; and the manner, in which I am discharging them. For discharging all these duties, I implore divine assistance.

April 20th.—In what respects have I become a changed or new person? 1st. My opinions with regard to happiness and the object of my existence are changed. I used to think that happiness might be found in wealth, and the applause of men. I no longer think so; and believe it can be found in nothing, but the exercise of love to God and man, and the discharge of our respective duties to them. The object of my existence, I now believe to be, the glory of God, my own and others *eternal* happiness. 2d. My designs are new. I did have ambitious designs. I wished and laboured to make my way to distinction. My design now is, to live not for myself, but for God; not to make myself great, but useful; not to regard ease, comfort or reputation; but with perseverance to press on in that way, which reason, conscience, and the word of God point out; not to indulge the desires of the flesh, of the eye, or the pride of life, but to deny myself, and strive after holiness.

April 27.—I am not happy ; I never have been. There is no year of my life, that I would desire to live over again. I have always wished to have time hurry faster by, and have known only occasionally an hour, when I could say to it, stay. The last year of my life has, upon the whole, been the most unhappy ; although some hours have afforded great pleasure. Yet my circumstances were never more comforting. I am free from debts, which used to disturb me ; and am enabled to purchase the house, which my father occupies, and thus give my parents the satisfaction of being secured of a comfortable shelter. I am successful in my school ; and am treated kindly and respectfully by those, whose favour I value. My circumstances are in every way calculated to make me comfortable and happy ; yet I am miserable. I feel no interest in any thing. The fountain, from which I sometimes draw refreshing and gladdening draughts, is mostly poisoned and embittered, and aggravates my thirst. I feel no ardour in study ; no ambition ; I am satisfied that my thirst for happiness can only be quenched at that fountain of living water, to which all are invited to come, by the author of light and happiness. I can only say, " Lord, lift thou upon me the light of thy countenance."

Besides these letters and this journal, which

afford so much evidence that there existed a divine life in the soul of Mr. Morse, there was also a most brilliant exhibtion of it in all his conduct. His whole heart and soul were engaged in the momentous and solemn obligations of christianity. A female friend, who intimately knew him, thus relates with what religious order and object he divided his time. In the morning he rose at four, and studied the sacred volume till six; he then either rode or walked till seven, when he met the family, where he boarded, and led their devotions; after breakfast he retired till nine, when he went to his school, and remained there till twelve; social visits then occupied him an hour; in the afternoon he was at school till five; then were his walks those of usefulness; he either visited the parents of sabbath school children, or the sick poor; either administering the consolations of the gospel, or warning the wicked to flee from the wrath to come. Many evenings were spent in meetings of prayer, and in meetings of the teachers of the sunday school of the parish, to which he belonged."

Of that school he was, for a long time, an able and faithful superintendant, and discharged its duties with uncommon discretion and success. Once a month he was in the practice of addressing its teachers and children, relative to their respective obligations, and the importance and advantages of

such institutions; and his whole heart seemed warmly engaged in these topics. He considered the services of a Sunday School teacher, among the most valuable and interesting, in which a christian can be engaged. His labours are remembered with warm approbation and lively gratitude; and a future day of glory in heaven may disclose the exhilarating fact of many souls of youth, that were saved by his pious care. Would that more, like him, could fully appreciate the blessing of the establishment of Sunday Schools, could generously patronize them by commendation and liberality, and could diligently labour in this beautiful department of God's vineyard. Sunday Schools are undoubtedly among the highest spiritual blessings of modern times; and are a most successful nursery for extending the kingdom of the Redeemer, and multiplying the heirs of glory.

Mr Morse was indefatigable in his religious exertions, and seemed to be ever endeavouring to ascertain how much good he could do. At the village of New-Castle, situated on the Piscataqua river, a little more than two miles below Portsmouth, there is a population of about 800 persons; a large portion of whom are fishermen. They have been many years without any settled minister among them, and till lately have had very few advantages of education. Not long before Mr. Morse's death

he undertook to serve that people, as their spiritual teacher, and to do for them as much, as he could, while only in the capacity of a layman. He performed religious services for them twice every Sunday; and his hearers continued to increase weekly. He formed also among them a Sunday School, which was usually attended by about seventy or eighty persons, many of whom were adults. To this parish he was very much attached; and to it he most assiduously devoted his services. His visits to New-Castle were always made on foot, and made most cheerfully. "I feel best satisfied," said he "while engaged in this business. There is something in it, which reaches beyond time, and takes hold of immortality." The very Sunday before his afflictive decease was spent in the religious instruction and improvement of the people at that village. He took the direction of their Sunday School and preached to them twice on that day; and, with a most singular aptness, selected a hymn, to be sung during the service, that seemed predictive of his own destiny.

In all his devotional exercises he manifested great seriousness and fervour, which not only evinced the sincerity of his piety, but made a very deep impression on his hearers, and gave promise, had his life been spared, that he would have been an eminently successful minister of Christ. For

this holy and responsible office he was diligently preparing himself, and looked forward to the discharge of its duties with impatient and enthusiastic anticipation. It was his own expression, that he longed to be engaged in the work of the ministry, as one would long to be released from a dungeon, to enjoy pure air, and gladdening light. Various circumstances induced him however to delay the commencement of his ministerial course. He was confirmed in this opinion by the following judicious advice of a very eminent divine. "I should advise you not to think of entering upon the ministry without a thorough systematic study of theology. You will find, when you come to engage in the study, that you have entered an extensive field; and I have no apprehension that you will rest satisfied with superficial views of the great truths of religion, of which you are to become a public teacher. God has endowed you with talents, which, with proper cultivation, promise a more than ordinary degree of usefulness; and I could wish, you might possess every facility, that is required to prepare you for extensive usefulness. You will do me the justice to believe, that I do not say this to flatter you. I wish you not to make worldly fame your object; but I wish you to aspire to pre-eminent usefulness in your day and generation." Influenced by such advice, Mr. Morse determined to devote

himself another year to study, before assuming the pastoral office; an office, for which his temper and whole character were eminently fitted. But fulfilling early the work, which was gives him to do, God took him early to a church and home, where human learning will not be wanted, where his devotions will be unpolluted and uninterrupted, and where his work will be eternally rewarded.

Mr. Morse, notwithstanding his various duties; his faithful attention to his school; his diligent study of theology; the concerns of his parish, as he called it, at Newcastle; the superintendance of a Sunday school there, and of a very large one in Portsmouth; and his frequent engagement in religious exercises; was not regardless of his advancement in letters. He made himself a very good French and Italian scholar, and obtained some general acquaintance with the Hebrew language, while he remained in this town. He directed his mind also to the study of intellectual philosophy; and became familiar with the standard works of taste. Actively was he pursuing the most effectual course to render himself a ripe and finished general scholar; and his ardent desire of wisdom, energy of soul, correct taste and love of application, would eventually have secured to him that character. So high was his reputation for classical attainments, as well as preeminent piety, that in the summer of 1825,

the Executive Government of Dartmouth College recommended him to the Trustees, as a Tutor for the ensuing year. They were extremely desirous of obtaining his services, and actually wrote to him on this subject; but, ere the letter was received, all his earthly labours and honours were terminated.

I pass now to the melancholy catastrophe, which closed Mr. Morse's brief career. The interesting contemplations, in which we have indulged, are shaded by deep sorrows and dark visitations, as we meditate upon his premature and sudden loss. He, who has breathed into us the breath of life, and opened to the soul the glories of redemption, has appointed the hour, in which that breath must be resigned to him, and the spirit must appear before its Redeemer. Our days are numbered; and there is a limit, beyond which we cannot psss. Mr. Morse's days were destined to be few. He came forth as a flower, and in the morning was cut down. God sent him an early and a sudden summons; but, though sudden, it was not unexpected; his life was a constant preparation for it; and his master found him watching.

From an unfinished letter, left among his private papers, dated May 19th, about a month preceding his death, and addressed, but never sent, to his parents, it seems, as if God had written on his mind in mysterious characters some forewarning of a

tremendous calamity, that was soon to befall him. That letter is so singular and affecting, that I cannot forbear to insert it, though it is mingled with many painful sentiments.

"Now I suppose you think of me more or less every day; but my mind is emphatically *buried:* it is in a dark, cold grave, which in some way has been made around it; which shuts out the sun, the beauties and the interest of the world; where is no blossoming and ripening of pure joys, but only "flowers, whose wild odours breathe agonizing pleasures;" "such plants, as spring beneath her step, as passion flies over the world's wilderness, and vainly pants for some celestial fruit." Perhaps I may not say "vainly." You cannot understand this; and I have a good mind to tear it up, and begin anew. But I will go on, and give vent to my feelings, and then determine what to do with the record of them. As often, as my thoughts can emerge from this cavern of death, and catch a little light, I look over the earth with pleasure; and my eyes turn homeward, and my heart springs there. Then again the mists thicken; the prison-doors are shut upon me; and my mind is chained to its own dark musings with a spell, which is irresistible and deadening; a spell, which dries up the current of the affections, and wearies, and parches the heart." It was about this time also that in a letter to one of

his friends he said, I have a *strange feeling*, when I look forward; and can see in imagination but a *step* beyond the present.

It was moreover a singular and affecting coincidence, that, at the meeting-house in New-Castle, where with unusual earnestness and solemnity he performed religious services the Sunday previous to his decease, he selected for singing, and read the following appropriate verses from Watts's Hymns:

It is the Lord, our Saviour's hand
Weakens our strength amidst the race;
Disease and death at his command,
Arrest us, and cut short our days.

Spare us, O Lord, aloud we pray,
Nor let our sun go down at noon;
Thy years are one eternal day;
And must thy children die so soon?

Yet, in the midst of death and grief,
This thought our sorrow shall assuage;
Our Father and our Saviour live;
Christ is the same through every age.

Before thy face thy church shall live;
And on thy throne thy children reign;
This dying world shall they survive,
And the dead saints be raised again.

These circumstances seemed to be so many merciful monitions to Mr. Morse that God was soon to "cut short his days" and "let his sun go down at noon." He had an intimate friend and fellow-boarder, named Edwin B. Steevens, who

was a native of Claremont, N. H. a graduate of Dartmouth College; an instructer of the Lancastrian school in this town: a young man of excellent principles, gentle manners, and an ardent benevolence, that beamed from his features, and was conspicuous in all his deportment. As an instructer, he possessed the best of qualifications, was much beloved and respected, and was eminently useful. He was a warm friend to the cause of Sunday Schools, and was superintendant of the one, established at St. John's Church, where he regularly worshipped, while in Portsmouth. His traits of character and pursuits were therefore very congenial with those of Mr Morse, and eminently calculated to secure his sympathy and attachment. The warmest affection did indeed subsist between them; and they loved to associate together and to mingle in the same employments and pleasures.

The health of Mr Steevens not being good, he proposed to his friend, Morse, to take an excursion with him to the Isles of Shoals, distant about a dozen miles from Portsmouth; a place not less remarkable for its grand scenery and curious history, than for the ignorance and moral desolation of a large proportion of its inhabitants. The proposal was readily accepted by Mr. Morse, inasmuch, as, besides gratifying his friend and promising himself much agreeable recreation, it afforded him the op-

portunity of dispensing religious instruction to poor perishing souls, who were in eminent need of it. Accordingly an agreement was made with an experienced pilot of this port, to take them to the Shoals on the following day. Early on Wednesday, June 22, they went on board the boat. The morning was one of uncommon brilliancy, such as is known among us only in that enchanting month; it rendered every thing around delightful; and yet was so delusive, as scarcely to permit the apprehension of danger. The boat glided swiftly over the waters, and conveyed them in a short and happy passage to the Shoals.

They landed at the chief island, where Mr. Morse manifested an extreme interest in the moral condition of the inhabitants. He distributed among them a variety of religious tracts, with which he had previously furnished himself for this occasion; and, in the most serious and affectionate manner, dispensed to them much valuable religious instruction and exhortation. In the afternoon he embarked with his friend Steevens, to return home; but the wind had now become violent, and the sea was greatly agitated. When the boat was about a league from the mouth of Portsmouth harbor, it was suddenly struck and thrown down by a violent blast, and soon filled and foundered. Seven persons were on board; and all in one awful moment were launched into eternity.

A man with a lad in another boat, supposed to have been at that time within convenient distance to have afforded relief, were witnesses of the accident; and, according to their own statement, saw several persons swimming and struggling for life, and heard their shrieks; but, for the honor of humanity we suppose it, they must have deemed any attempt to save the sufferers, to have been utterly useless, or too hazardous. But He, "who makes his wind to blow, and is mightier than the mighty waves;"

> Who plants his footsteps on the sea,
> And rides upon the storm,

had ordered that no arm should save in that perilous hour.

The pilot boat was expected to have returned the same evening; but, as nothing was heard of it even at midnight, there was not a little uneasiness about its safety. The remainder of the night was passed in painful apprehension. It was rumored early the next morning, that some persons at Newcastle had, towards the evening of the previous day, seen a boat founder in the gale, and that the tops of the masts were still visible above the water. This rumour seemed confirmation of the general fear; produced a most afflictive sensation, and covered numerous faces with astonishment and sorrow. The foundered vessel was soon proved to be the very boat, in which Morse and Steevens had sailed. A

dispatch was sent to the Shoals, with the faint hope that they might have remained there. But they were gone; gone to be seen no more. Another confirmation of this distressing truth was derived from finding Mr. Morse's hat floating on the waves. In it were a few tracts and a letter, on the back of which were sketched some hints, probably for a religious exhortation. His father once showed me with extreme emotion this touching memento and relic of his son. After these awful facts were known, it was the earnest wish of all, that the bodies of the deceased should be recovered for the purpose of interment. Neither labor nor expense was spared for this purpose; but every thing was unavailing: the bodies were, mysteriously but wisely, forbidden to be seen any more, till the sea shall give up its dead.

Thus prematurely and suddenly perished at the early age of twenty-one years and three months, the excellent, the amiable, the pious Morse. Thus perished his valuable, beloved and benevolent friend Steevens. There perished also five other persons, two of whom were children and favorite pupils of their Lancastrian teacher. Such a dispensation struck an awe into all hearts, and eloquently proclaimed the instability of earthly comforts and the nearness of every soul to the verge of eternity. Such a catastrophe feelingly persuaded

us, that in the midst of life we are in death; that our brightest hopes may in an instant be destroyed; our securest possessions violently snatched away; our most exqutsite joys unexpectedly overshadowed by the darkest clouds of wo. Surely, when we witness such vicissitudes in the world, why should we ever need any other monitor, as did an illustrious monarch of old, to tell us that we are mortal?

Who needs a teacher to admonish him
That flesh is grass? that earthly things are wind?
What are our joys, but dreams? and what our hopes,
But goodly shadows in the summer cloud?
There's not a wind, that blows, but bears with it
Some rainbow promise: not a moment flies,
But puts its sickle in the fields of life,
And mows its thousands with their joys and cares.

Never did an event seem to awaken more lively sympathies among us, than this awful destiny which befel Morse and Steevens; and there was a general desire to pay every respect to their memories. The disaster was affectingly noticed by several clergymen of this town, soon after its occurrence. The Trustees of the Academy, that was under the charge of Mr. Morse, passed a vote, expressing the following flattering testimony to his character;—"that, entertaining a high sense of his intellectual, literary and religious worth, and of his distinguished fidelity as an instructer, they deeply regretted his early death, as a heavy loss to their institution, as

well as to the community." The Portsmouth Forensic Club, a respectable literary society, to which Morse and Steevens belonged, voted that an appropriate address should be pronounced before them, to testify the affectionate remembrance, in which they held the virtues of two such beloved and lamented members. The Rev. George E. Adams, now Professor of Divinity in the Theological Institution in Bangor, Maine, an intimate friend of Mr. Morse, was appointed to perform this grateful, though melancholy office. I thankfully avail myself of the kind permission to insert a few extracts from that address.

* * * "The parted waters have already flowed together;—and, where our friends were struggling for life, the vessel pursues its wonted course; and the shore, that echoed to their unanswered cry for help, is silent again. The smile of cheerfulness will again illumine our countenances; we shall resume our accustomed employments. But, though we may cease to indulge in the bitterness of grief, shall we cease to remember the calamity, which causes it? Oh, no. You will not forget the lesson so impressively taught us, by our Heavenly Father. Many a tender recollection will come over us in our future hours of musing; and often shall our hearts pay the tribute due to departed worth, when we shall think of Steevens and Morse.

"You all full well remember that day so joyous, yet so sad. How pure was the air—how delightful the temperature—how refreshingly blowed the breeze—how blooming were the fields—how brightly the waters reflected the sunbeams! But, before the close of that day, He, whose dispensations are infinitely wise and benevolent, however mysterious they may seem to us;—He, whose ways are in the sea, and his path in the great waters, and whose footsteps are not known; He saw fit to permit an event, which brought anguish to many hearts, dashed to the ground many fond hopes, disappointed many expectations of happiness. Reluctantly we believed the sudden, the unwelcome tidings; deeply we mourned our own severe bereavement; keenly did we feel for sorrowing parents, brothers, sisters, friends. All, that we can now do, is to call to mind the characters of these departed friends, to fix the memory of their virtues in our hearts, and to listen to the warning voice of providence, so distinctly heard in this heart rending event. * * *

"I come now to speak of one, whom I not only esteemed, as an agreeable companion, and respected as a virtuous man, but loved, as an intimate friend. I allude to Mr. Morse, with whom I was led by a similarity of circumstances, views and pursuits, to associate almost constantly;—who posses-

sed my confidence, and the inmost of his soul, I think, I knew. What he was in the social circle most of you remember. He was in the highest degree frank, open, and conversible. The social principle never flourished with greater vigour in the bosom of any individual. 'I could readily give up any thing and every thing earthly,' would he say, 'if the service of God and the good of his fellow men required it, except the pleasure of refined society; with that it would be hard to part.' His feelings were extremely susceptible; and he was peculiarly disposed to intimate friendships. There were an ardour and a firmness in his affection, which none will ever appreciate, but those, who have read the interior tablets of his heart. He appeared among us, artless, as a child. So little was he acquainted with suspicion, that even experience could scarcely convince him, that there are those, whose feelings and conduct do not correspond with their professions. With simplicity of manners he united unusual strength and manliness of mind. His mode of thinking was remarkably philosophical; and his inquiries were generally conducted in a way, most likely to lead to the discovery of truth. His desire for knowledge was ever restless. He was candid and thorough in all his investigations, and especially so in relation to the doctrines of religion. He felt it to be of unspeakable importance to know the

truth ; and he was resolved, as far as possible, to lay aside all prepossessions, and search for it, as for hid treasures. He was as fully resolved, as ever any man was, to be ready to give a reason of the hope that was in him. He knew that his natural powers were given him, that by their assistance, he might read the book of nature and the book of revelation, and thus find the way to heaven.

"As another exemplification of Mr. Morse's strength of character, I mention his industry and systematick habits. In these respects I have scarcely found his equal. His avocations, while here, were numerous; yet he made great acquisitions in various branches of knowledge. He improved the early hours of morning and the broken intervals of the day; and thus made valuable attainments in hours, which others, less industrious, entirely lose. He possessed also an uncommon command over his own mind. He performed every duty, because the proper *time* had come, not because it was suggested by the accidental feelings of the moment. When the appointed time had arrived, you found him, not hastening to the place, but already there. I say not that he never varied from his plan ; but, that he exhibited from principle a remarkable uniformity of conduct, when compared with other men.

"The religious character of our departed friend

was too strongly marked, and had too manifest an influence over all his conduct, to allow me to pass it over in silence. Other men pay respect and doubtless sincere respect to the external observances of religion. They acknowledge their obligation to love and obey their Maker; but many do not appear to *feel* it. Mr. Morse felt it. The thought was present in his mind by day and by night. He saw that it was reasonable for a man to live not for himself, but for God, that made him; for Christ, that died for him; and for his fellow men, the children of the same heavenly Father; and, that if he neglected such duties, it would be right in God to deprive him of heaven. These convictions roused every faculty of thought and feeling, and led him to repentance for the past, and holy purposes for the future, and to a reliance upon the pardoning mercy of God, through Jesus Christ. Thus there commenced within him a new life, which was more and more manifest in his external conduct to his dying day.

"As a consequence of these religious principles, he resolved to make usefulness, the grand object of his life. The profession, which he chose, was that of a christian minister. But he would not wait, till he had actually entered into this office, before he commenced doing good. He knew that he might not live to see that time. It was during

the last hour, that I spent with him, that he said, I do not expect to live a great while; but, as long as I do live, I intend to make myself useful. Consistently with this resolution, he gave his first attention to the useful duties of his School. The Sabbath School, an institution, second to almost none in value, next claimed his attention: and in it he, as well as his friend Steevens, took a distinguished part. The sorrow of the surviving teachers of the schools, with which they were connected, and the tears of the children, manifest the loss, that has been experienced. For many months, Mr. Morse went weekly to one of the humblest dwellings to instruct a little company, that there habitually assembled. I might tell you of his frequent visits among the poor and ignorant; and of the relief which he brought them; and I could tell of many an act of filial and paternal affection. But he was unostentatious of these things, while he lived; perhaps, now that he is dead, he would not wish to have me speak of them.

"Steevens and Morse are gone before us. Be it our duty to make ready to follow them. Whose turn shall it next be? We know not. But whoever he may be, if he will now be faithful to his best interests, he shall feel, as he departs, that it is far better than to stay. As he crosses the mighty gulf, the winds may roar and the waves

may roll, yet shall he gather courage from hope of the goodly land beyond ; and as he approaches nearer and nearer, the waters shall become more peaceful, and his soul more joyful, till he enters the port of eternal rest. Ah, shall there be one among us, who shall neglect the necessary preparation ; who, as he sets sail from the earth, shall make no sign of hope to comfort his weeping friends ; who, when he reaches the distant land, and comes in sight of its towers of gladness and its palaces of joy shall be bidden to depart?"

"Our friends are gone; and where are we? We are yet standing on this little island of life. The ocean of eternity is washing away the sands at our feet. Soon we shall sink, and the waters close over our heads. Are we ready for such a destiny ?"

"Great God, we surrender our dust to thy care;
And oh, for the summons our spirits prepare."

These copious extracts from the eulogy on Mr. Morse furnish a true and just testimony to his worth. Besides these expressions of respect, letters of condolence and high commendation of his excellence were addressed to his parents from various and from flattering sources ; and they also breathe the utmost regard for his intelligence, piety and virtue. There is room for extracts from only

two of them. The first letter is from the Principal of the Wesleyan Academy in Wilbraham, Massachusetts, a clergyman of high attainments and eloquence, who had much influence over the mind of Mr. Morse. The other is from a distinguished person, who recently resigned the Presidency of Dartmouth College, on whom Mr. Morse bestowed the highest respect and a large portion of his affection; and from whom praise would have been eminently acceptable to him.

"Ever since I read the account of the lamented death of your son, I have designed to write to you, on the subject. I know it is pleasant, to have the sympathies of friends to commiserate our grief and share in our sorrows. I would fain let you know, that I feel for you; and, if possible, would gladly share a part in your burden. But I doubt not, you have consolation, to which the mere worldling is a stranger; and a consolation, which you could not have had, if your son had been a mere worldling. That your beloved Horace was amiable; that he was intelligent, that he was learned; and above all, that he was a christian, a living christian; a christian, whose faith was growing stronger, and had already enabled him, notwithstanding the bright prospects before him of worldly advancement, "to reckon himself dead indeed unto the world, and alive to God through our Lord Jesus Christ;"

that he was all this, while it seems to increase the estimate of the loss, operates also to sooth your sorrows and sustain your heart. By a strange paradox, such considerations increase the anguish, and at the same time, make it more tolerable. They do not lessen the number of the tears, but they sweeten them; the bosom swells not less with the heaving sigh, but it is less corroded by it. There is a healthful ingredient in such a cup of grief, which, though it diminishes not, but rather increases the draught, nevertheless, neutralizes its acidity, destroys its feverish heart, and makes it, on the whole, a cup of blessing. I could almost wish, that I was *such* a father, that I might have the *painful pleasure* of drinking such a *mournful mixture*, so *sweetly mingled*. Indeed I do taste with you of this cup. From the time, I met with your son at your house, and spent, as you well remember, several long hours in conversation with him, I conceived a love for him. We were at variance, you know; we conversed on topics of controversy; and neither, at that time, seemed to convince the other. From such conversation even old friends frequently rise up with alienated affections. This interview, however, had a different effect upon me. Though a youth, he was not heated; though sometimes apparently hard pressed, he was calm. His respect for the feelings of his

parents, from whom, he felt himself conscientiously bound to differ, his manly and becoming treatment of me, his opponent, and his urbanity and gentleness of manners, challenged my affection and excited my surprise. * * *Your sympathizing Brother in Christ,* W. FISK."

"Permit me to assure you, that I most deeply and sincerely sympathize with you in the sore bereavement, which you are called to experience. I know not that it will mitigate your sorrows to know that they are shared by others; but I can assure you that many hearts have been caused to bleed by this stroke of Divine Providence. Your son had many friends; I know not that he had an enemy in the world; and few have ever had such strong hold of the affections of their friends, as he. He was a rare youth. Possessing a disposition uncommonly amiable and a mind highly cultivated, he secured the esteem of all who knew him; but what specially endeared him to his christian friends was his unfeigned piety. I know not when I have been more struck and affected, than I was by the account of his death. And what rendered it particularly affecting to me was, that I had just written to inform him that we should need his services as tutor, the ensuing year. My letter probably reached Portsmouth just about the time that he fell into the arms of death.

"His death is one of those mysterious providences, which call for the exercise of implicit confidence in God. I had often indulged the most fond anticipations of his future usefulness; and, why he should be cut down in the morning of his days and in such a manner, we are unable to see. All we can say is, the Lord hath done it; and although clouds and darkness are round about him, righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. The Lord seems to be saying to us, as he said to the wondering disciple, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." Let us confide in his wisdom and goodness, and "be still and know that he is God."

"That your son is happy I have no reason to doubt. I saw him a few weeks before his death at Concord, and spent an hour or two in his company. He opened his heart to me with great freedom, and gave me the most satisfying evidence, that his heart and his treasure were in heaven. Indeed, for the last six or eight months, he appears to have enjoyed in an unusual degree the consolations of religion.

"I was not without anxiety concerning him, when he went to Portsmouth, knowing his youth and the temptations, to which he would be exposed. But I am happy to learn, that he has uniformly maintained the character of a decided christian. Wishing you divine support under your present affliction,

"*I am, yours most affectionately,* B. TYLER."

Nothing can be more correct, than these commendations; and, coming from such sources, must satisfy every reader, that my own high estimate of the subject of these memoirs is not the effect of mere enthusiasm or blinded attachment. It was the combination of eminent virtues in his character, that caused his death to be so deeply lamented, and awakened in all, who knew him, the utmost respect and esteem.

The powers of his understanding were of no inferior order. He had ability to make himself master of almost every subject, in which he might choose to interest himself. His perceptions were rather remarkable for accuracy, than rapidity. He had an independence of mind, that, uninfluenced by the power of custom or prejudice, aimed directly at the investigation of truth. He was guided by such sentiments, when his understanding was applied to an examination of the Gospel. "I do not feel bound to think, like any man," said he, "any further than he thinks, like the Bible. I am to be governed in my opinions and conduct by my own reasoning and by scripture. I am to make up my own opinion independently, as far as possible, of the whole world; and I shall try to be bound by nothing but truth, and to throw off all the shackles of falsehood and prejudice." Yet, independent as he was in the search of truth, he approached it

with great diffidence, and betrayed a most becoming humility in all his opinions.

Nor were the qualities and excellencies of his heart less distinguished, than those of his understanding. The pure religion, that he embraced, was happily exemplified in all his affections and conduct. It led him to the exhibition of an uncommon filial love and reverence. The interests of his parents were inseparably twined round his heart. For them he not only prayed, but laboured. After settling the debts, incurred for his education at College, he contributed all the monies, which he could afford, towards relieving his father amidst severe pecuniary embarrassments, and towards purchasing the house, in which his parents now reside. His fraternal fondness and interests are clearly seen in his letters to his brother. The doctrines of Christ inspired him with an enlarged and noble philanthropy. It was this, which led him to feel so deep a solicitude for the souls of his fellow beings; that impelled him to instruct, exhort, and comfort the people at Newcastle; that filled him with such such spiritual concern for children; that rendered him an active Sunday school teacher; that made him constant at religious meetings, and engaged in benevolent associations; and prompted him to be a frequent visiter and comforter of the poor.

The quality however, that most distinguished the heart of Mr. Morse, was a warm, constant and unfeigned piety. This trait, kindled in his infancy, and increasing with his years, lighted and cheered the whole path of his pilgrimage. The greatness and goodness of his Almighty Father, and his obligations to filial obedience and love, seemed with him to predominate over every other thought and feeling. His life, as well as his letters and journal, afford sufficient confirmation of this statement. His whole conduct was a rare and beautiful instance of the remembrance of God in youth, and conveys an eloquent and profitable lesson to the young, who may know his history. From his earliest childhood he gave his heart to heaven. But it was at College, where his piety received a very large accession of lustre and warmth, and was moulded into a powerful and decided principle and habit, so as to lead him to an open profession of faith in Christ, and to render him deeply interesting to his christian friends. From that time, till his spirit was called home, his walk was with God; his delight was in the law of the Lord, and in that law did he meditate day and night; he endeavoured to live above the world, and to have his conversation in heaven. He was regular and ardent in his devotions, and laboured to live by faith on the Son of God. In this holy course, he showed the judicious

and happy application of his powers and attainments. He was wise unto that, which was good ; wise unto salvation ; wise according to the Scriptures, and according to that beautiful description of wisdom, given by Pollok in his Course of Time.

The wise man, said the Bible, walks with God,
Surveys far on the endless line of life;
Values his soul; thinks of eternity;
Both worlds considers, and provides for both;
With reason's eye his passions guards; abstains
From evil; lives on hope, on hope, the fruit
Of faith; looks upwards; purifies his soul;
Expands his wings; and mounts into the sky;
Passes the sun, and gains his father's house;
And drinks with angels from the fount of bliss.

But in the religious ardour of Mr. Morse there was neither bigotry, fanaticism nor gloom. He had no unkindness of feeling or manner towards those, who differed from him in opinion ; his zeal was always accompanied with knowledge and discretion, never leading him into any austere habits, nor clothing him with any repulsive sanctimony. His was a piety, that led him to a renewed fidelity and activity in the discharge of his secular duties ; and there was an animating and becoming cheerfulness in his manners, which gave practical proof that the ways of religion are the ways of pleasantness and peace. I am no enthusiast or fanatic, said he, I have none of the sourness of the bigot, no gloom or long-facedness, if I may so call it. I

act no more from feeling than from principle, and am ready to give a reason to any man, who asks it, for all that I do. I think and act upon the subject of religion, as I could upon any important subject, that interested me.

There was much that was prepossessing in the appearance and manners of Mr. Morse. His countenance was full of animation and intelligence, and spoke at the same time the most perfect ingenuousness and honesty. He had ready powers of conversation, and brought to it much information and interest; and, what was particularly delightful, his heart manifested the utmost warmth and simplicity in all, that he said and did. His manners were natural, easy and gentlemanly; and his disposition was uncommonly amiable. From religious principle he exercised such a command over his passions and affections, that he acquired a singular calmness and equanimity of temper. There was a frankness about him, that disarmed the distrust even of the most suspicious; that won the regard of all, who knew him; and that rendered him a safe and confidential, as well as agreeable companion. He was warm, constant and faithful in his friendships, and demeaned himself with such habitual circumspection and prudence, that I do not believe, he had an enemy in the world. Besides there were about him a becoming indepen-

dence of mind, dignity of sentiment, and manliness of spirit, which commanded universal respect, as well as esteem. The evil passions seemed to have no place in his bosom. He envied no man's superiority; triumphed over no one's infirmities; and never took pleasure in detracting from any one's merits. Neither had he pride, vanity, affectation or conceit; but he was ever meek, gentle, charitable and humble. The spirit of Jesus was within him, enlightening his mind, purifying his heart, and clothing him with such a moral drapery, that the christian observer immediateiy discerned him to be a child of God, a true follower of the Lamb.

It is the object of biography to convey important moral instruction, to exhibit the practical results of principles and the lessons of experience, to be a beacon for others in the pilgrimage of life, to describe the rocks and quicksands, that threaten destruction or injury, and to mark the safe and prosperous channel of virtue. The life of Mr. Morse is not without its moral instruction and influence. Though he had no connexion with worldly pleasures and glory; though his virtues were felt in only a limited circle, though his merits awakened little interest in worldly minds; yet his character was not without importance in the kingdom of Christ, and will be contemplated with pleasure

by the true Christian. Most men entertain delusive and erroneous views of true greatness. The greatest hero and saint in the estimation of Deity may be some obscure individual, whom the world overlooks, who has gained no earthly laurels, and even whose wishes never strayed beyond the sequestered vale of life.

His warfare is within; there unfatigued
His fervent spirit labours; there he fights
And there obtains fresh triumphs o'er himself,
And never withering wreaths, compared with which,
The laurels, that a Cæsar reaps, are weeds.
He sits secure, and in the vale of life
Holds no ignoble, though a slighted place.
Task Book VI.

Many of those, who "shall shall hereafter shine, as the brightness of the firmanent, and as the stars forever and ever;" will be found to have been among the most meek and retired upon the earth, who dropped into their graves without leaving any sensible void in society. In that bright world above, where the holy shall stand in the presence of God and receive their glorious recompense, all shall learn that on earth a "christian was the highest style of man." In this view the life of Mr. Morse becomes interesting and profitable. In the garden of Jehovah he was a choice blossom; and his memory will long diffuse a fragancy of grace.

His life was indeed a most beautiful example of

early and matured piety, and of a heart, that seemed to be entirely dedicated to God. Blessed were the influences and results of such a course. What filial obedience and affection, what brotherly love, what purity, benevolence, integrity and uncommon excellence did it produce! How effectually did it preserve him from vice and folly in childhood! How valuable was its efficacy in bringing him closer to God, even when his passions and appetites and temptations were the most powerful, and demanding the strongest chain! How faithfully did his piety guard him in his collegiate course, when there are so many snares for youthful innocence; when the spirit of rebellion, the pride of independence, a hatred of restraint, and a contempt of academical authority are often madly assumed, as virtues; when the contagiousness of depraved principles is apt to be most violent, common and rapid; and when the love of pleasure or the desire of literary distinction is often vehemently struggling to discard holiness from the heart and oppose the entrance of divine grace. Few, like Mr. Morse, who look back upon their Academical course, are able to say that during that seductive and dangerous period, they kept a record of the spiritual state of their souls, a journal of their growth in holiness. It is to be feared that many at our Universities, enjoying the blessings of a liberal education, are absorbed only in their

studies or pleasures, are insensible to their guilt, value not the preciousness of a Saviour's blood, extend their views only to sensual indulgence or worldly distinction, and reflect not on the high purpose, the noblest benefit of education, the culture of the soul for preeminence in the eternal kingdom of God. Yet many of them are on the verge of eternity; and must soon answer for time and talents misapplied, and for a criminal disregard of their Redeemer and his Gospel.

How effectually did Mr. Morse's piety accompany him, when passing from a collegiate life to mingle in a novel, enlarged and seductive intercourse with the world; and how eminently did it serve to establish deeply and broadly his principles, and build high around him the walls of holy defence! How much peace did it give to his conscience, and usefulness to his life, and preparation for that awful moment, when the troubled waves conveyed his spirit to God! What an admonition is this to parents to begin, at the earliest period of the lives of their children, to inculcate on them the lessons of piety, and that infinitely important injunction to "remember their Creator in the days of youth"! If the young would honor, comfort and bless their parents, to whom they owe more, than they can ever repay; if they would give joy to a brother's or a sister's heart: if they would gather the most profit-

able wisdom and instruction, and know in what true happiness consists; if they would guard against the snares and temptations of the various scenes and conditions in life: if they would live to a good and glorious purpose, and die in peace with themselves, with man and with God; let them know, and feel, and realise the beauty and importance of piety. Let them learn from the example of Mr. Morse to live to Christ. Let them

> Peruse the letters of a youth,
> Whose pen was dipt in heavenly truth;
> His virtuous struggles trace;
> Then will their melting bosoms bleed,
> And quicken there the precious seed
> Of self renewing grace.
>
> *Remains of H. K. White.*

Let the young always wear about them the instruction of the Gospel: for "it shall be an ornament of grace unto their heads and chains about their necks; its fetters shall be a strong defence, and its chains a robe of glory."

Mr. Morse's death, no less than his life, conveys a most solemn and instructive lesson. What could have been more unexpected, than the summons, that called him to the eternal world? In the flower of youth, in the vigour of health, in the ardour of intellectual pursuit, what could have seemed so improbable, as that there was but a step between him and death, and that his sun should go down.

when it was yet day. Surely "sixteen is as mortal, as fourscore." "Man knoweth not his own time; as the fishes, that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds, that are caught in the snare; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them." When Mr. Morse entered the boat that brilliant morning, which was to be the last of his earthly pilgrimage, and was anticipating a delightful excursion on the water with his amiable companion, and was confiding in the skilfulness of his pilot, and the enchanting loveliness of the weather, how improbable was it that he should never return, that the places "which had once known him, should know him no more forever." Without the slightest apprehension of danger, he stood on the precipice of the eternal world; so true is it that "the farthest from the fear are often nearest to the stroke of death." There could not be a more striking instance of the uncertainty of life; of the folly of confiding in our preservation, even for an hour; and of the danger of delaying repentance, as such procrastination may delay forever the peace of the soul.

Mr. Morse's removal from the world was not only an unexpected, but also a sudden event; it was almost instantaneous, and perhaps afforded him not even the opportunity of imploring divine assistance and mercy;

"A warning was denied."
How many fall as sudden, not as safe?
As sudden, though for years admonished home;
How dreadful this deliberate surprise!—*Young*.

He was called away probably before his mind could snatch a single thought of the awful voyage of eternity. Surely such a circumstance should fill us with apprehension and tender concern for our own souls, lest they may be suddenly summoned to another world. When it is considered that we may have no time to *think*, much less to *do* any thing, relative to our future condition, it is madness for us any longer to presume, that preparation for heaven belongs only to the visitation of sickness and sorrow and the closing scene of existence. This is apt to be the besetting delusion of mankind; but the circumstance of Mr. Morse's death awfully declares, that the present moment is the only safe one to work out our salvation; that, if we have the enjoyment of life and reason, they must be immediately and earnestly occupied in the infinitely momentous interests of the future world. Though death came on him unexpectedly and suddenly, yet did it not find him unprepared for the dread summons:

Yet was not his departing immature,
For ripe in virtue was he reft away,
And pure in spirit, as the blessed are pure;
Pure, as the dew-drop, freed from earthly leaven,
That sparkles, is exhaled, and blends with heaven.
Life of H. K. White.

He was found, when the last awful message came, "with his loins girt, and his lamp trimmed and burning." His life, conversation, letters, journal, prayers, spiritual exertions, holy conflict with himself, and victory over the world, all confirm the belief that he was "looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God." He lived in the faith, adoration and love of Jesus; and all that he had to do, "when the waters came in unto his soul," was to commit it to his Saviour. How blessed then to that soul were the religious lessons, gathered from his parents, his early dedication to God, his belief in the healing efficacy of a Saviour's blood, and his ardent and unfeigned piety! How joyful must have been his entrance into the eternal world! Had he led a loose and immoral life, what terrors and agonies would he have felt, to have appeared thus suddenly before his Judge; whereas his self-denial and devotion made this life a happy one, and gave him triumphant hopes of a life of bliss, that never shall end. How eloquently do these circumstances show the importance and beauty of youthful piety, and the obligations of all men to follow holiness. They, who go down to the chambers of death, without having made their peace with Heaven, cannot enter into the abodes of blessedness. They, that seek Christ and live to him, shall abide with him in glory forever. How earnestly do I

wish that the young may be affected by these truths; that this pathetic story may be urged home powerfully on many minds. I cannot forbear on this suitable occasion to enforce my own entreaties by the eloquent expostulations of Dr. Doddridge:

"I beseech you, by the affection, with which all, who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, long to see you brought back to him; I beseech you by the friendship of the living, and by the memory of the dead; by the ruin of those, who have trifled away their days and have perished in their sins; and by the happiness of those, who have embraced the Gospel and are saved by it; I beseech you by the great expectation of that important day, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven; by the terrors of a dissolving world; by the sound of the Archangel's trumpet; and by that infinitely more awful sentence, Come ye blessed, and depart ye cursed, with which that grand solemnity shall close; I beseech you, finally, by your own precious and immortal souls; by the sure prospect of a dying bed, or of a sudden surprise into the invisible state; and, as you would feel one ray of comfort in your departing spirit, when your flesh and your heart are failing; I beseech you by your own personal appearance before the tribunal of Christ; by all the transports of the blessed, and by all the

agonies of the damned, the one or other of which must be your everlasting portion; I affectionately beseech and entreat you in the strength of all these united considerations, as you will answer it to your conscience, as you will answer it to your Eternal Judge, that you dismiss not these thoughts, these meditations, and these cares, till you have brought the matter to a happy issue; till you have made a resolute choice of Christ, and his appointed way of salvation, and till you have solemnly devoted yourselves to God, in the bonds of an everlasting covenant."

An appeal so impressive, cannot fail to have an influence on the minds of youth, for even while they read it, the message of death may be on its way to some of them.

Ten thousands to their endless home
This awful moment fly;
And we are to the margin come,
And soon expect to die.
Dear Jesus! be our constant guide,
Then, when the word is given,
Bid death's cold stream and flood divide,
And land us safe in heaven. *Kelly.*

Let it now be hoped, that Mr. Morse has not lived or died in vain; that the affecting exhibition of his piety will not be without imitation; that his letters and journal will kindle devotion in those, who may read this volume, and lead them to seek with

earnest prayers for the divine guidance, pardon and blessing. Let it now be hoped, that Mr. Morse's death will be life to the souls of many; that his dust may send forth a quickening virtue, "as once the bones of a dead prophet worked a greater miracle than his life"; that his character will eloquently preach for him, though his tongue is silent; that his pious productions, now twined into a flowery wreath by my feeble instrumentality, may be accepted as a grateful and fragrant offering on the altar of Christ; that through his Redeemer's merits, he may have an exceeding great reward; and that, when the sea shall give up the dead, that are in it, he may rise to glory, honor and immortality.

SELECT PAPERS

OF

HORACE B. MORSE.

SELECT PAPERS.

ON THE MORAL INFLUENCE OF THE LIVING ENGLISH POETS.

THE poet introduces us into a world of his own creation. If he permits us to look around upon its scenery, we are delighted with a view of all, that is grand or lovely in nature. A profusion of foliage, flowers and fruits, brightens the whole scene. The society, to which we are introduced, is of a superior order. Their words strike upon the ear with all the sweetness of the melody of angels. All the beauties of imagery and all the charms of language clothe the sentiments, which they express. When introduced by the bard of pure taste, these beings appear in all the loveliness of the highest degree of moral excellence. They breathe the thoughts of pure spirits; and as they enhance the pleasure of those, who associate with them, they purify their hearts, exalt and refine their taste, and ever exert a happy influence upon their character. But, while we eagerly seek for communion with these friends of virtue, let us cautiously distinguish them from those fallen spirits, who, "transformed into angels of light," steal into the heart secretly to sow the seeds of corruption, to destroy every moral sentiment and forever banish the pure spirit of elevated devotion.

At a time like the present, when the popular poetry obtains such an extensive circulation and such universal applause, and exhibits such decisive proofs of extraordinary powers of mind, the inquiry becomes of the highest importance, what influence it is exerting and will exert over the moral character of the community. It must be a source of deep regret to the moralist and philanthropist, that talents, which exert a powerful influence over the public mind, are so often perverted to the promotion of immorality and irreligion. The poet, who at the present day moves the passions of men most strongly, surrounds us with beings, as nearly resembling the fallen spirits of darkness, as men; whose pride and haughtiness are only equalled by their misanthropy and misery; whose merciless, cold-blooded villany is united with a proud elevation of soul, a bold daring and contempt of death, which excite our admiration and enlist our feelings in favour of minds of such mighty, though ill-directed powers.

But it is not so much the association of magnanimity and energy of character with worthlessness and guilt; it is not the description of the dark passions, that war in the breast of the villain; or the sullen scorn and blighted heart of the misanthropist, that gives a dangerous tendency to the writings of Lord Byron; it is the spirit of immorality and scepticism, that breathes throughout his larger poems. The creations of his dark soul are infidels;

and they hesitate not openly to avow their sentiments, and to point the shafts of ridicule against all those pure principles, which form the bonds, that bind hearts to their Creator and to each other. The poet in his own words tells us to "pursue what chance or fate proclaimeth best, peace waits us on the shores of Acheron," where "silence spreads the couch of ever welcome rest."

It is impossible to hear such sentiments, to associate with such sordid, malevolent beings, without unconsciously suffering the best feelings of the heart to wither. Like the society of the vicious in real life, they are imperceptibly corrupting every generous principle, and forming the character of the unconscious reader for life. The ridicule of distinguished men is ever found more powerful than the strongest arguments, to eradicate principles which are not firmly established. The superior talents of Lord Byron have acquired for him such universal admiration, that his total disregard to morality, his disbelief of any religion and his sneering taunts against Christianity in particular, are calculated to fix a deep, a dangerous and lasting impression upon the minds of a large class of his readers. There are indeed interspersed among his works some scenes of exquisite tenderness, which awaken the generous emotions of the heart; and their situation, like that of beautiful flowers upon the barren desert, makes them far sweeter and

more beautiful. But they serve to render his works still more dangerous, to sweeten the poison, which they infuse into the mind.

The works of Moore, which are distinguished for equal sweetness of melody, equal extent of circulation and nearly equal admiration with those of Lord Byron, deserve for their licentiousness the same frown of disapprobation. He, who presents us the flowing bowl, into which he has infused a secret, deadly poison, is not the less guilty, because he deceives us with the appearance of a pleasant, healthful beverage. But the poetry of Campbell, of Cornwall, of Rogers and Milman, is of a far more elevated character. We dwell with the highest pleasure and profit upon the beautiful pictures, which Campbell gives us of the artless simplicity, the filial piety of innocence; of the paternal affection of a heart, dilated with benevolence; and of that pure love, which elevates and ennobles the soul.

The poems of Milman awaken emotions, still stronger and more elevated. The affections of the heart, which he paints, are more exalted than the love, which binds together the hearts of parent and child, more powerful than the attractive charms of wealth or the glitter of the highest earthly glory. They are the affections, which the sublime spirit of devotion inspires; a spirit, which raises the soul of fallen man to its original dignity; which can support the feeblest, most delicate frame under the torture,

inflicted by the devotees of superstition; a spirit, which destroys the dark, unhappy passions, and inspires benevolence and love. The society of such pure spirits, as breathe throughout these poems, exerts an influence upon the heart, which has been compared to that of precious odours, which always impart a portion of their fragrance to those, who happen to be amidst them. This influence is not immediate and of short continuance, but lasting and operative.

By dwelling upon pictures of all, that is pure and lovely in nature or in mind, is generated a love of moral beauty and excellence, which will deter us from the indulgence of those passions, which we detest. In our anticipations of the future, happiness will ever be associated with virtue, and misery with vice. Our hearts will constantly bind around them all that is pure and excellent in nature or art, and turn with instinctive abhorrence from moral deformity. Thus fortified, vice with all its meretricious ornaments will assail us in vain. The elevated soul will look with contempt upon all that is mean and sordid, will look beyond the struggles, the selfishness, the faithlessness of the world, to—

"A home in that land of the soul,
Where hearts always glow with friendship and love;
And days ever cloudless still cheerily roll,
Like the age of eternity blazing above."

August 20, 1823.

ON SCEPTICISM.

Scepticks, as a class of Philosophers, are too well known to need description. It is my object, to point out *some of the causes and evils of Scepticism.* By Scepticism, I mean not alone what is properly called the doubting philosophy, but that state of uncertainty upon any subjects of inquiry, on which the mind rests without conviction. Infidels and deists are generally, but not necessarily scepticks. They may be dogmatists. But the essence of scepticism is doubt.

The most celebrated disciples of this school of philosophy have long since doubted away their lives. Greece and Rome, famous alike for great virtues and great vices, for the noblest and the basest actions, for their high attainments in wisdom and in folly, are distinguished no less for the mad vagaries of scepticism, than the ridiculous absurdities of superstition. If the mass of the people paid their homage to gods of wood and stone; the sophists, equally absurd, laughed at the idea of the existence of superior beings, or even of the existence of the wood and stone, which composed the deities of their countrymen. If the common people scrupulously and conscientiously adhered to their trifling religious rites, as the very essence of virtue, these wise philosophers on the contrary, saw no dis-

tinction between virtue and vice. In their view, the blackest crimes differed not from the noblest and most virtuous actions. All distinction between right and wrong; truth and error, was to them a silly conceit. Should any one assert that murder was wrong; that he was certain of his own existence, and of the existence of other material objects around him; that, without question, two and two made four; these deep free-thinkers would pity his whimsical notions. They would tell him that when his mind should be freed from the mists of prejudice, he would see no guilt in murder, he would find that there is nothing in existence but ideas, and that it would appear to him just as reasonable that two and two are equal to ten, as to four.

There have not been wanting men in modern times, and those too of the highest powers of mind, who have met with equal success in reasoning themselves out of their senses; men, who have soberly concluded, that the more one enquires and examines, the greater will be his uncertainty; and that the highest attainment in philosophy is to doubt every thing, even those truths, of which there ever has been, and ever must be in all men, an intuitive belief. Now when we find men of the deepest research, and the clearest and most vigorous intellect, like the sophists among the ancients, and Hume, Berkley, and others, among the moderns;

when we find such men denying the existence of the material world, and using the most subtle arguments to prove what is directly contrary to their own senses, and shocks the common sense of all mankind, it seems a phenomenon almost unaccountable. They were men, who have struggled nobly against the power of superstition, that prince of the powers of darkness, who has borne down and debased the minds of millions; they were geniuses, whose light could not be put out by the mists of prejudice; but, for the absurdities, which they have forsaken, they have embraced others so preeminently ridiculous, that all mankind pronounce them fools or madmen. Indeed there are probably none of whom it may be more truly said, that "too much learning hath made them mad."

It is our object at present to ascertain more particularly the cause of this madness; and of this there can be no question. There are, as is well known to all, certain truths which are the foundation of all reasoning, but which do not themselves admit of proof. Such are the first principles of mathematicks and others similar, of which we have an intuitive an irresistible belief. Such are the truths, which we receive upon the testimony of our senses. If these truths be doubted, there is nothing, upon which reasoning can be built. If any one denies the existence of a material substance,

which he sees and feels, all reasoning is at an end. If any one doubts his own existence, there remains certainly no way, in which he can be convinced of it. If his own senses cannot satisfy him, nothing can. These intuitive axioms should be considered as settled and certain. But, as it is the very first step and grand principle in the sceptical philosophy to doubt all received opinions; and, as these truths necessarily and by nature gain our assent, the cause of this assent must be examined.

The most celebrated of modern freethinkers have actually set out in their inquiries with an attempt to prove their own existence and the truth of that report, which the senses bring of the material world. They have dwelt with such intenseness of thought, with such persevering, unwearied study upon the mysterious and unsearchable connexion between the mind and the body which it commands, between cause and effect, and other subjects, equally beyond the reach of reason, that they have lost themselves in the inextricable mazes of their own subtleties. Can it be wondered at, that those, who thus perplex themselves at the outset of their inquiries with such fundamental truths, should doubt all conclusions, drawn from them; that they should involve every subject in obscurity; and finally settle down in unlimited scepticism? It is without doubt, this quibbling upon intuitive axioms, which has confoun-

ded, and darkened the highest faculties, and caused such a waste of intellectual energy.

But, besides these doctors in philosophy, there is a more numerous class, who, though less advanced, has proceeded just so far as to become sceptical in those points, which are the great end of all philosophy, the moral relations and high destiny of man. However such inquiries may have resulted heretofore, it is one of the plainest dictates of reason, that all the opinions, which we entertain, should be most carefully and critically examined; and that we should most sedulously guard against the influence of prejudice in our decisions.

Knowing, as we do, that opinions the most absurd and ridiculous, and customs the most unnatural and cruel, have been and are still received by strong as well as weak minds, merely through the strength of prejudice; that the nations of the earth now build their hopes and fears upon systems, directly opposed to each other, each despising or pitying the absurdities of the other system, each confident that they and they only are correct; noticing, as we cannot fail to do, the influence of public opinion, and above all of parents and friends in forming the sentiments of our acquaintances; and, reflecting likewise upon the character of the mind, upon its susceptibility of being powerfully biassed by the passions, we must see the reasonableness and ne-

cessity of bringing all our opinions to the test of reason.

Every reflecting mind must have made this conclusion; and from this most reasonable principle, have begun the inquiries of many, whose research has ended in scepticism. Conscious, when arrived at years of maturity and reflection, of the influence of superstition and prejudice over the mass of mankind, they have determined to institute a rigid and impartial inquiry into the principles, which have been taught them, and boldly to reject, what will not stand the test and bear the approval of reason. They have perhaps, been taught that it is impiety to doubt; but their understanding tells them that truth does not fear the closest scrutiny; that the author of their being has given them reason, in order to distinguish between truth and error; and their consciences approve of the inquiry, which they contemplate. With a high resolve to break through the restraints of prejudice, with a fixed resolution to throw away every thing, however sacred it may be esteemed, and however dear it may be held by others, which will not bear examination, they with ardour set themselves to the work. They eagerly and fearlessly read the works of infidels and scepticks; they acquaint themselves with all that unbelievers have written against the faith of their fathers; against those principles, upon which,

have been founded the hopes of those whom they love; principles, which in their minds, are associated with every thing that is virtuous, every thing that is amiable or praiseworthy. They proceed perhaps for some time, with great interest and patience, in the examination of opposite probabilities. They read all arguments on both sides, till, perhaps wearied and perplexed, they relax their exertions; lose the ardour which first excited them; and, becoming engrossed in the business of life, settle down in uncertainty and doubt.

It is to be feared that this is the case with many, who have too much intelligence to give implicit credence to unexamined principles and yet too little patience or too much indolence to go through the process of patient research. They proceed just far enough to unsettle the principles, in which they have been instructed, without forming satisfactorily any new ones. They may be able to bring arguments on either side of the question, which would produce conviction in the mind of another, but by no means satisfy themselves. Such a result of inquiry is in almost every instance occasioned by actual imbecility or indolence. The inquirer heaps up perhaps a confused mass of all that critics, and casuists, and scepticks, have written; and, utterly unable to digest this congeries of discordant facts and conflicting arguments, or too

indolent to think for himself, he remains forever bewildered and uncertain.

These probably are in general the causes of scepticism in the minds of candid and conscientious inquirers. But besides these, there are multitudes of others, who decide indiscriminately all religious systems, as the wild vagaries of madmen, or the silly conceits of cowardly superstition; who have no better claims to be considered men of discernment and vigour of intellect, than the wildest enthusiast of the most absurd sect of religionists, that ever existed. The reasoning, upon which they support their infidelity, will not approve itself to sound sense more strongly, than his. Supported by the opinions of men, distinguished for abilities and attainments; borne on the strength of passions and considering it a mark of intrepidity and a proof of superior powers of mind to laugh at what others consider sacred; they with pleasure throw off the restraints of moral obligation, and silence as far as possible the warning voice of conscience and reason.

Is it not more than probable, that many, who applaud themselves for independence in their principles, and who would scorn to be influenced by human opinions, or by prejudice, are notwithstanding powerfully biassed by the authority of great names merely, and by a lurking, secret desire to be free from moral restraints? However, they may

laugh at the superstitious absurdities of mankind; and whatever they may think of themselves; such men have no better support for their opinions, than fanatics and enthusiasts. They enjoy perhaps their laugh at the world's credulity: but, it is a remark, which the observation of almost every person must have suggested to him, that from the most sceptical to the most credulous, all mankind either deride or pity the follies of each other. The causes of scepticism may then be resolved into three: an inquiry into subjects beyond the reach of the understanding; intellectual imbecility; or the indolence of the inquirer.

It now remains to point out some of the evils of a sceptical state of mind; and I shall confine my remarks to the influence of such a state upon the mind, the feelings, and conduct of the inquirer himself. Scepticism, as well as superstition, gives false and wrong representations of the powers of mind, and of the certainty of human reasoning. The sophist finds himself unable to comprehend every thing; and concludes that, through the natural imperfection of the mind, he can be certain of nothing. As superstition cannot bear the scrutiny of reason, she must in self defence assert the incompetency of the mind to sit in judgment upon her dogmas. Both unite in endeavouring to destroy our confidence in that guide to truth, given us by the author

of our being. And the inquirer, who finds himself perplexed in his search for truth, will be very much disposed to impute to the feebleness of the human powers, or to the want of additional information, that uncertainty, which is occasioned merely by a want of patience and industry. He will be in danger of contracting a habit of indecision, and of ending his inquiries on all subjects without arriving at conviction. A wavering mind will discover itself in action. The conduct will be inconsistent and unreasonable; and having lost the support of settled principles, and being borne down by the current of unrestrained passions, he is likely to sink into a state as unhappy, as it is degrading. It is much easier to pull down, than to build up. It is no very difficult matter to fill the mind with doubts of the truth of principles, to which it has given its tacit assent; but it is difficult to settle again upon new and more correct principles. Our natural indolence induces us but too strongly to pursue "what chance or fate proclaimeth best;" to look upon the world, as a scene of illusions, and upon man, as "a child of doubt and death," whose highest wisdom is to secure in his transient course what pleasure the buffetings of fortune will permit, without saddening his days with unavailing fears of what is to await him hereafter.

But after all, there is a misery in such a state

of uncertainty about what so nearly concerns us, more poignant and deadening, than the severest sufferings in life can inflict upon a mind, which is buoyed up and strengthened by firm, unshaken principles; and besides, the epicure must at length become sated with pleasure, the fondest expectations must too often be disappointed, and the brightest hopes blasted. The man of pleasure must very often feel life to be tasteless and irksome. Disappointed in his pursuits, and dissatisfied with himself and the world, his heart becomes embittered with misanthropy; and the generous and benevolent affections, which it is our happiness to exercise, wither away, and die under its baneful influence. The prospect before him is clouded and dreary. He is animated by no hopes, excited by no desires; and feels only a disgust and weariness of life, with a bitter sense of its vapidness and worthlessness. Such are not always the immediate, perhaps not certainly the necessary effects of scepticism; but history and observation teach us that the consequences are but too often thus unhappy, and injurious.

ON PERSEVERANCE.

"A continual dropping wears away stone."

EVERY one has probably heard and witnessed something of the surprising effects of the slow and constant dropping of water upon the close texture of the rock. The attempts of an industrious ant to demolish the Egyptian pyramids would not seem more futile and absurd, than the trickling of a few drops of water for producing the effects, which are forced upon our belief by irresistible testimony.

The reflection, which I would draw from this fact is, that the feeblest exertions may, by perseverance, accomplish much. Many are deterred from attempts the most honorable, and in which they might by persevering exertions have succeeded, by underrating their own powers, and magnifying the difficulties in the way. Others, who set out in a particular pursuit with ardour and energy, encouraged by hope, stop short in their course from a view of the obstructions before them. The obstacles seem of such a commanding height, and of such discouraging size, that it must cost immense labour to overcome them, if all their exertions do not prove absolutely abortive. The progress, which others have made, and the eminence, to

which they have attained, seem to them the result of the exertions of superior talents and the favour of fortune.

No one will presume to question, that there is a very obvious difference in the mental powers of men, and that in most instances those, who become eminent in any profession, are distinguished for superior natural talents. It is presumed also, that it will be as generally allowed, that ordinary capabilities may, if properly improved and exerted, give their possessor a very honorable distinction. Without patient and habitual exertion, distinguished eminence is not attained by even the brightest genius. Ask the man, who stands high in the temple of fame, how he has attained so enviable a situation, and he will answer, by ascribing it to unremitted and painful exertion, joined to a belief of his own power to accomplish his object.

But many, instead of supposing that labour is necessary to genius, believe that superior talents alone, and almost without cultivation, must inevitably obtain the wreath of glory. The lives of all distinguished men contradict this opinion. Demosthenes copied the whole history of Thucydides three times with his own hands, and otherwise laboured, like Hercules himself, before he pronounced those orations, which even now strike the reader with admiration. Cicero's labors were incessant.

Finally, all, who have ever been eminent as professional men, have been equally distinguished for close application.

These facts lead us irresistibly to give habitual exertions more importance, than we are wont to do. There is hardly an object within the reach of the human faculties, but may be accomplished by the energetic, constant exertion of even ordinary powers. But, it should be noticed, that these exertions must be habitual; the object must be pursued with undeviating and continued assiduity; every obstacle from the beginning must be patiently removed; and, although the exertions may be feeble and the progress slow, yet progress is made; the road becomes smoother, the farther one proceeds, and he will pursue his object with new facility and increasing pleasure at every step. It may be doubted, whether men of superior talents do not most frequently fail of making those acquisitions, which are indispensible to substantial greatness, and suffer ordinary minds to rise superior to them; whether the most eminent stations are in fact attained by men of the most superior natural talents, or filled by ordinary men, and acquired by persevering exertions.

May 5th, 1823.

DIFFERENT INFLUENCES OF PROSPERITY AND ADVERSITY ON CHARACTER.

"Bona rerum secundarum optabilia, adversarum mirabilia."
Seneca.

A MAN is said to be in a prosperous condition, in the ordinary acceptation of the term, when he has the means of furnishing himself, not only with the necessaries, but also with the luxuries of life; when he succeeds well in his pursuits; and obtains the honor and respect of those, with whom he is in any way connected.

Such a state is peculiarly gratifying to mankind; it is what all are aiming at with unremitted assiduity. The situation of a youth, who is born to a fortune, is considered far preferable to that of one, who must depend wholly upon his own industry to raise himself to an eligible situation. The advantages and pleasures of the former are no doubt far superior to those of the latter: but experience and observation teach us that those, who are early furnished with the means of gratifying every desire, who can depend upon the property, to which they are heirs, for future prosperity, seldom arrive at that perfection of the moral and intellectual character, which the discipline of adversity tends to produce. They are always surrounded with a host of false friends, who flatter all their foibles, carefully

conceal from them their faults, and urge them on in the current of dissipation, but always leave them just in season to find an escape for themselves from the wreck, which destroys the character and with it all the flattering prospects of their credulous dupes. The ruin of such a character is always hastened by the strength of passions and appetites, which, from a long possession of power, become altogether ungovernable. This is one of the worst, but not most uncommon cases.

Let us turn to one, who has always met with success from his earliest youth, but who has still been preserved from vice and dissipation; and see how far his powers of mind will be brought toward perfection, compared with those of a person, who has been tried with adversity, as well as prosperity. The former is wholly unfit for any business of difficulty and hazard. Having always been carried along by the tide of success, he has never had occasion for the exercise of those powers of mind, which are necessary to conduct one safely through the perplexities and difficulties, which often attend the discharge of important duties. The least opposition stops him in the midst of his pursuit. The mere chance of danger or difficulty puts him to a stand. He is wholly inadequate to any business, which requires self denial.

But a series of adverse circumstances from one's

early youth will produce a very different character. Habits of industry, economy and prudence are early formed. Knowing that his hopes can find no other foundation than his own exertions, and the character which he may establish, he is compelled not only to refrain from the excesses and extravagances, into which the favourites of fortune are seduced, but also to bring into active exercise the powers of body and mind. His judgment becomes matured by exercise, and he gradually forms an independent and decided character. Experience has taught him in every case to prepare for the worst. Difficulties he has heretofore met, and he expects and is prepared to meet them again. He does not swerve from his duty, because it is attended with danger; nor alter the plans, which, upon proper information and due reflection, he has formed, because, weak and timorous men predict danger and difficulty attending them.

Upon his first setting out in life, his circumstances and conduct, which so evidently reprove others, may very probably make enemies, who will not hesitate to bring to light all the blemishes and peculiarities in his character, which the closest scrutiny of hatred could discover; and for a time he may find himself set up, as an object of ridicule for the vicious and profligate. But, eventually, the malice of his enemies will work out his best interest.

He will thus obtain a knowledge of his actual faults or imperfections, and may then correct them. He will learn to despise the sneers of the abandoned, and to pursue the course, which duty points out, with unwavering firmness and independence. He will thus establish a character upon a foundation still firmer, than when first attacked. Such circumstances will form a character, which, in difficult and untried situations, will act with promptness and resolution. Accustomed to draw from his own resources, he will never fail for expedients. His experience will enable him to make a just estimate of mankind ; and his whole course will fit him to pass through life honorably for himself, and profitably for his fellow-men.

March 24th, 1823.

ON LOVE OF FAME.

"Contempta fama, contemnantur virtutes."—*Tacitus.*

The love of glory is a passion so deeply rooted in the heart, that nothing, short of death itself, is ever able completely to eradicate it. It seizes as powerfully upon the strong, as the weak mind; "grows with its growth, and strengthens with its strength." The peasant, whose contracted views are bounded by the narrow circle of a few rustick friends and acquaintances; and he, whose enlightened mind extends over the universe; both seek alike for celebrity and applause.

This ardent desire of fame, as it has aroused the energy of man to some of the most noble and worthy achievements, has also prompted acts the most detestable and destructive. While some have endeavoured by their virtues to gain that "consentiens laus bonorum," that "incorrupta vox bene judicantium," upon which alone true glory can be founded, and by which we can transmit a name to posterity, to be forever remembered with love and reverence; others, by the splendour of conquest, have endeavoured to shed a lustre over their lives, which should make them ever celebrated as heroes of dauntless intrepedity, and bold achievements. But in the conquest of nations, and the sacking of cities, we

see the devastations of war; we witness the tears of the forlorn widow, and the cries of the tender orphan; and, the hero, whom our admiration placed among the stars, sinks below the level of humanity. The man, who strives to raise himself to fame by making himself the means of the most extensive injury to his fellow beings, must be forever condemned by the wise and the good. But a desire of the approbation of the virtuous, and the pursuit of such measures, as are calculated to make one loved and reverenced by his fellow men, cannot be derided as unworthy of a good man.

We believe that the sentiment of Tacitus, that "he, who despises fame, contemns such virtues as lead to it," is made with the same acuteness and and penetration, for which he is characterized, and that in a limited sense it is truth. Certainly he, who is perfectly indifferent to the opinion of those, with whom he is connected, who cares not whether his conduct meet with the approbation or contempt of the good and wise, must be raised very high above the feelings of men in general, or sunk to a level with the brute creation. Some such persons we have seen. But the storm of powerful passions and the current of ungovernable appetites have reduced them to this abject situation. They have indeed despised the virtues, which restrain and govern the appetites, and confer upon those, who

practise them, prosperity and happiness. Indeed we have no hesitation in saying that he only, who feels himself deserving of the contempt of men, will ever be indifferent to their opinion of him.

But, though reason convinces us, that we are not to despise the approbation of others, nor to endeavour to destroy such a powerful friend of virtue, as the love of true fame; yet the question naturally arises, how far are we to cherish and gratify this passion? Reason and revelation concur in the injunction, that we are to make it our greatest object, that our conduct be such as to obtain the approbation of God and of our own consciences. We are not therefore to seek for applause at the expense of virtue. He, who by the baseness of intrigue and the servility of flattery, seeks the assistance of the vicious and abandoned profligate to raise him to notice and trumpet his fame, must ever be despised by men of discernment and virtue. But he, who by the practice of virtue, and by decidedly stemming the tide of vice, strives to make himself most useful to his fellow beings; and endeavours to gain their love and approbation by imparting to them the most extensive benefits, must ever command our admiration and applause. He, who "through the mists of passion and of sense, and through the tossing tide of chance and pain," holds on his way unfal-

tering "up the steep ascent of nature," will ever receive the encouragement of truth and virtue.

He, who seeks for applause merely for the gratification of vanity; although he does it by the rigid practice of every duty, upon which public opinion has fixed the stamp of virtue; notwithstanding the benefit which the world might derive from his exertions, if his motives were purely selfish; does not deserve the reward of the truly virtuous and disinterested benefactor. He only, who, at the risk of present honour and reputation, will follow the dictates of conscience, by opposing a firm, unwavering front against the torrent of vice; who is ever ready to express his detestation of baseness, though supported by power and grandeur; who denies himself the indulgence of self-gratification; and calls all the powers of his mind and body into exercise for the service and benefit of his age; deserves, and is justified in desiring, the approbation and love of his country.

Nov. 19*th*, 1822.

THE NATURE AND EFFECT OF THE INFLUENCE OF PHILOSOPHY UPON ORATORY.

COMPARING oratory at the present time with what it has been in literary nations, who have preceded us, the most superficial observer must notice a striking diversity in its nature and effects. Many causes, which do not now exist, conspired to give an importance and excellence to oratory among the Greeks and Romans. The nature of their governments and the hazardous state of those Republics at the times of Cicero and Demosthenes, were very favorable to the full developement of their oratorical talents. They were such, as to call forth the utmost exertions and to enlist all the powers of their minds for one grand object. But, without regarding the efficiency of these causes in giving the orator that influence, which he exercised over those ancient Republics, the object of the present discussion is to inquire what influence philosophy, or the habit of correct reasoning, and the general diffusion of knowledge, have exerted upon the nature and effects of oratory.

It is perfectly obvious to every one, that an address, which should delight an ignorant mob, might disgust an enlightened audience. It is evident then, that to please, or in any degree to influence an audience, the orator must adapt the nature of

his address to their information and general taste. One, who should address an ignorant mob in a close, argumentative manner, would be hissed, before he had delivered half his oration. Their minds need cultivation, before they can comprehend a series of logical deductions. One, who would succeed with them, must address their passions and flatter their prejudices; and his measures will appear far more eligible, than if supported by a rigid demonstration of their utility. With an enlightened audience, on the contrary, the method of the orator must be nearly the reverse. They have the same passions as the ignorant, but they are better governed by reason. Their understandings must first be convinced. They will not blindly follow the suggestions of the orator, because they are pleased with the gracefulness of his manners, or the elegance of his style; but, after coolly attending to his arguments, they appeal to their own understandings, exercise their own reason, and after stripping the arguments of the orator of their ornaments, judge them by their weight.

With enlightened, well informed men then, an oration or address must be distinguished for correct reasoning and exalted ideas, in order to persuade or please; whereas with the ignorant these qualities are not only superfluous, but disgusting.

These remarks are confirmed by facts. Litera-

ture among the Athenians was almost wholly confined to a few, who had property and leisure to bestow all their attention to it. This enables us satisfactorily to account for the ceaseless fluctuation of their counsels and government. Their ignorance enabled the artful demagogue to lead them into any base measures; to banish their worthiest, most illustrious men; to annul the most politick laws; and to adopt in their stead the most destructive regulations. Demosthenes was hissed at his first appearance before the people, not for want of talents; not because the measures, which he proposed, were injudicious or his style inelegant; but because he lisped in pronouncing certain letters, and was not graceful in his motions. These may be said to be the evils of a democratick government; but no one can deny, that had the common people been more enlightened and better informed, sophistical declaimers would have had less, and wise, judicious men more influence. The character of the orations of Demosthenes is passionate and vehement, exactly suited to enlist the passions of a thoughtless, hasty populace.

But it was not in Athens only, that men took advantage of the ignorance of the common people to compass their artful designs. Numerous seditions, wars, persecutions and rebellions have been fomented by the impassioned eloquence of enthu-

siastick, ambitious men. The passions of the ignorant are easily inflamed, and neither their own judgments, nor the reasonings of others can govern them. But, as the community become better informed, and learn to think and act for themselves, they escape from the mischief of such idle declamation; seditions and rebellions cease, for the influence of the orator cannot outweigh his arguments. Such has been the efficacy of the general diffusion of knowledge in our country. Though we may occasionally hear some of these popular declaimers at a town meeting, who read much in periodical papers of patriotism, liberty and other precious words, and understand nothing of their meaning, yet the publick are gradually learning to think and act for themselves. These facts, and the common dictates of our understandings, bring us unavoidably to the conclusion, that in proportion to the general diffusion of knowledge, oratory must lose its influence, and become more argumentative.

April 22d, 1823.

ADDRESS TO A "JUVENILE SOCIETY."

It is, my young friends, with no ordinary degree of interest, that your parents and friends meet you on the anniversary of this Juvenile Society. There is something peculiarly delightful in finding the heart early disposed to expand with benevolence; in seeing children and youth forming themselves into associations for the promotion of human happiness; in observing their exertions, feeble as they may be, mingling with the energies of the christian world in extending the blessings, which a beneficent parent has showered upon them, to the less favoured portions of the human family. It affords the highest pleasure to see the youthful breast, swelling with emotions of kindness and pity towards the unhappy; to mark the opening mind, looking abroad for objects of benevolence, and moving the hand of charity from one part of the earth to the other. We hope, my friends, that you will always cherish these exalted feelings; that amidst the profusion of blessings, by which you are surrounded, you will often reflect upon the unhappy situation and prospects of those, who are almost as ignorant of the blessings of social life, as of those of pure religion.

The object of your association is one of the most noble and worthy character, which can interest your feelings. The hand, which you willingly open in

charity, may, by the mercy of God, diffuse the most invaluable blessings. The son, who may be educated by means of your charities, instead of lighting with his own hand the pile, which is to consume his widowed mother, will with filial affection provide for her wants, and cherish and cheer her in the decline of of life. The mother, instead of throwing her infant from her to be torn by the wild beasts, or casting it to be devoured by the alligator, will press it to her bosom with all that fondness of affection, which your parents have felt for you. He, who would have grown up in idolatry, and laid down his head to be crushed by the car of Juggernaut, shall bow down to the Christian's God, and with a heart glowing with gratitude, thank him for the knowledge of a Saviour, and pray for blessings upon you, who have caused this knowledge to be extended to him. How valuable are such prayers. They are worth more to you, infinitely more, than the trifling sums, which you expend for those, who offer them.

But this is not all the good, which is to follow. The children, who are, or who may be supported by you will, when they shall grow up and become parents, tell their children with heartfelt emotion the story of a Saviour, and the kindness of those, by whom they were made acquainted with him. Their children again will communicate the same to others, their acquaintances; who in their

turn will spread the glad intelligence, till the light of truth shall shine forth in full splendour, dispelling the shadow of death, which has so long rested over the people, and diffusing joy and happiness among them. How cheering must it be to every benevolent heart to see this day of brightness and joy, beginning to dawn upon the benighted heathen. How happy is the reflection, that you, my young friends, can assist and are disposed to assist in the efforts, which are making to impart so great a blessing—a blessing, the full worth of which can never be estimated on earth. We can tell you of the cruel rites, the worship of demons, the self-destruction, which are to be abolished by the knowledge of a Saviour: we can tell you of the widow, the infant, the aged and feeble parent, who are to be rescued from the most distressing deaths by your means: we can tell you of the love and kindness, which are to warm the hearts, hitherto cold and unfeeling; and of the comforts and blessings of social life, which shall be found in the abodes of cruelty; and then we shall not have told half the good, which you may be the means of effecting. The light of eternity only can reveal it to you. When the scenes of futurity shall open to your view, and you shall see those, who *were* once fast hastening down to the chambers of death, joining with pure spirits in anthems of praise to God, who has saved them; then, and only then, will you be

in any degree prepared to estimate aright the amount of your benevolence.

If then you can be the means of doing so much good, how ought you to persevere resolutely in your exertions. How should your breasts glow with ardour in so worthy a cause. How willingly ought you to sacrifice trifling indulgences, to increase your resources. But the good, you will be the means of doing, is not the only consideration, which should urge you to perseverance, and encourage you in your efforts. The thought of the pleasure, which it will afford your parents to see you thus engaged, should be a powerful motive with you. How gratefully will they behold you cheerfully contributing your aid to impart happiness to your fellow beings. Do you love your parents, and do you wish to afford them pleasure? then do all, that you can, in this work of benevolence. Would you perform what will be pleasing to holy beings and to the great and kind Parent of the universe? then persevere in doing your utmost in this cause.

But, while we thus urge you on, we would tell you that this is not *all*, which you should do. When we tell you of the miseries, which others are suffering, and which you may effectually relieve, we would have you reflect upon the advantages, which you are enjoying. We would ask you, if you ought not to love that being, who has poured these bles-

sings so profusely around you? Should you not always try to do that, which will be pleasing to him, and to avoid every thing, which will incur his displeasure? Ought you not to be fervently grateful to him for giving you birth in a Christian land, where you are not taught to bow down and worship wood and stone, but are directed to the worship of a being of the highest intelligence, the great Creator and Governor of the universe, the common and beneficent parent of all?

While then we most highly approve, and would urge you to cherish, feelings of kindness and compassion towards men, we would persuade you also to cultivate gratitude and piety towards God. We would have you accompany your charities not only with your warmest wishes; but with your ardent prayers to Him, who alone can give success to your efforts. While now you ask for favours to be bestowed upon the heathen, we would urge you to remember with gratitude to God the inestimable blessings, which you enjoy; and to lift up fervent aspirations to Him, that his goodness may not be abused by you, but that the principles of our holy religion may have their saving influence upon your own hearts; so that while the heathen "come from the east and from the west, and sit down in the kingdom of Heaven, you yourselves may not be thrust out."

ON BROTHERLY LOVE.

Among the various duties, incumbent upon mankind, there is no one more strictly enjoined, than that of loving each other. The primitive Christians were eminently distinguished for the disinterested, ardent affection, subsisting among them, and uniting their hearts in the bonds of peace and love. Indeed this union of hearts and interests was then, and ever has been considered by the world, a demonstration of the purity and excellence of a religion, that thus destroys those selfish principles, which are the origin of all evil; and produces those benevolent feelings of the heart, the fruits of which are love even to enemies, and the sacrifice of selfish interests to the happiness and good of others.

But, alas! how different are the feelings and the conduct of the professed followers of the Saviour towards each other from those, which were exhibited to the world, when they were constrained to exclaim, "Behold! how these men love one another!" Now, a trifling difference in opinion with regard to religious doctrines, or a slight disagreement as to the form of worship, is enough to separate hearts, which are united in what essentially constitutes the worship of God, and is

frequently sufficient to produce that distance, coldness and acrimony towards each other, which are so fatal to the interests of true religion. Instead of using all their exertions to be instrumental in building each other up in the most holy faith, how often do we find christians of one denomination, joining with the enemies of all religion, in searching out and publishing to the world the errors and failings of those, that belong to a church, whose opinions differ a little from their own.

But this want of brotherly love is not discovered only in members of different churches. The spirit of the world too often gains admittance into societies, united by the same faith and the same form of worship; destroying that peace and harmony and love, which are cultivated by "reciprocal kindness, candour and forbearance." As the existence of love for each other is a proof of the piety of professors, so a want of it is positive evidence that the world has too much influence over their minds, and that they are seeking too much the gratification of self. If they are seeking for holiness and purity of heart, no occasion can be found for strife or harshness among one another.

If the advancement of the kingdom of their Redeemer be the object of their desires, they will be united in their exertions and prayers; and an ardent love for each other will be the necessary conse-

quence. But, if the world has gained an undue influence over their minds, their interests are different, and will often clash with each other, and produce coldness and unkindness between them. The world will discover it, and rejoice; and the cause of religion is necessarily injured.

If then the want of brotherly love among Christians be attended with such fatal consequences, how important is it, that we strive constantly to cultivate this affectionate regard for each other; that we exercise a spirit of candour, of forbearance, and forgiveness. The cause of Zion cannot prosper, unless Christians are united in their exertions. The petty honours and distinctions, which the worldly minded prize so highly, ought not certainly to occasion a division and coldness between those, who look for a crown of glory hereafter; who seek for the applause of angels, and the approbation of Deity, before whom all created beings are, as the dust of the balance.

We are commanded "to love one another, even as Christ loved us;" and he so loved us, that he gave his life for us. How deficient then are we in love. Christians, who possess an affection for each other, may derive important benefits to themselves from this source. They will mutually strengthen, encourage and enliven each other in their heavenly course. They will participate of each other's sor-

rows and joys, and mutually unite in prayers and exertions for the advancement of the kingdom of their Redeemer. The strong will encourage and cherish the weak, and the cause of their Saviour will prosper. The impenitent will acknowledge the efficacy of religion, and be induced to seek for it. But, without this love, the characteristick of the disciples of Christ is lost. Christian professors differ not from the men of the world.

ON IMPROVING THE IMAGINATION.

THE imagination, according to Doctor Johnson, is "the power of forming ideal pictures." We find that some people possess this power in a greater degree, than others;—the reason of which must be referred, in a great measure, to nature: but, without doubt, education and external circumstances exert a powerful influence upon the imagination.

A man without education, who has from early youth been accustomed to be occupied wholly with the concerns of common life, although gifted by nature with a very warm imagination, will feel but little, if any of its influence. The obvious reason is that it has not such exercise, as is necessary to maintain its life; and for want of which, it lies dormant. By many it is said, that a naturally dull imagination may, by proper cultivation, be rendered vivid, and active. However this may be, no one will dispute the assertion that the imagination is capable of very great improvement.—By what means it can be improved is now to be shown.

A careful perusal of the writings of the most excellent, descriptive poets will seldom fail of awakening and enlivening the imagination. We should endeavour to picture to ourselves the scenery, which the poet describes; and the descrip-

tions of a good poet will be so clear, that a painter can, from the perusal merely, delineate the objects described.

A pleasant situation in the country, where nature appears in all its beauty, is most commonly conducive to the improvement of the imagination. But, without meditation, external objects will have no effect. We should endeavor to discover new objects of interest; we should exercise our fancy in picturing to ourselves scenery, that shall comprise all the enchantment, which we have ever discovered in nature.

But, as a dull imagination needs culture and improvement; so a lively one requires restraint.—Some persons, from long habits of meditation and, by indulging freely in all the excursions of a naturally warm imagination, render themselves unfit for the common employments of life. They cannot descend from their airy castles, where every thing is made to accord with their inclinations, to this lower world, where they are perpetually thwarted. They look forward in life to the time, when all things shall conspire to render them happy. To such a person the evils and misfortunes, which are the never-failing lot of every son of Adam, are peculiarly distressing. He is not prepared for them, but sinks under them. For such a malady, engagement in the bustle and activity of common

life is perhaps the only remedy. Imagination under the direction of reason is the medium, through which are received the most refined pleasures, of which man is capable.

The truth of this observation may be evident from a moment's examination of the influence of the imagination. And first, most of the pleasure, which we receive from poetry, is through the medium of this power. Were it not for this, the most lively descriptions would afford us no more pleasure, than the dullest geometrical propositions. By the agency of the imagination, we are transported to the very scenes, which the poet describes. We stand in the midst of his battles, and see in the clearest manner the hurry, confusion, strife and storm. We see all things, as with the naked eye. The beauties of nature also to a person of lively imagination afford the highest pleasure. He sees many charms, which are concealed from others. He is also a man of true benevolence; and is able by the powers of imagination to form just conceptions of the enjoyments and the miseries of his fellow beings. When he looks upon the ripening harvest, he reflects upon the numerous hearts, which are to be gladdened by it. He reflects upon the innocent gaiety and tranquillity, which reign in the abodes, near which he passes. He can also participate in the sufferings of others, and takes the greatest pleasure in relieving them.

It is through the imagination, that the christian receives a great part of his happiness. Amidst the trials and sufferings of this life, he is encouraged with the prospect of a world, where "all tears shall be wiped from his eyes," where "sorrow and sighing shall not come." He receives the greatest happiness in meditating upon the future world; and, under such cheering contemplations, bears all his sufferings with patience and submission. He believes, that "all these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, shall work out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." The joys of the other world are exhibited, as it were, "through a glass darkly;" but still he knows, that there he shall be freed from the bondage of sin, and the corruptions of his heart; and he anticipates the time of his dissolution with pleasure.

April 15th, 1822.

ON THE COMPARATIVE PLEASURES OF MEMORY AND IMAGINATION.

To measure precisely the actual quantity of pleasure, derived from either of these faculties, so that the difference shall be exactly known, is more than any one can or probably will attempt to do;—so that the only way for the advocate of either side of the question is to suggest arguments and facts, which may induce him to believe the faculty, for which he argues, the most productive of pleasure. Thus, I shall point out some reasons, which induce me to think that the imagination affords the highest enjoyment. And first: The imagination has more pleasurable exercise, than the memory. That it has more exercise of any kind is not asserted; neither is it allowed to have less: but the proposition to be defended is, that it has more exercise which is agreeable, than the memory.

That the pleasure received from the recollections of past scenes of enjoyment, particularly from the happy scens of childhood, is not so great as that which is universally derived from the imagination, is an assertion, which, to produce conviction of its truth, I think needs scarcely an attempt to prove. Because, first—every one perhaps has, upon thus recurring to days of happiness, felt some degree of regret that they are passed, to be enjoyed no more

But moreover, such recollections occupy only a small portion of a person's time, when compared with the hours in which the imagination is agreeably exercised. It is well known, that all persons are more disposed to look forward, and form plans for the future, than to spend their time in a vain retrospection of the past. In fact, while engaged in their usual business, men are always exercising their imaginations with joyful anticipations of future happiness. Every one is no doubt conscious, that much of his past delight has consisted in 'building castles in the air.' In this exercise of the fancy there is nothing to disturb a person's enjoyment. He erects noble edifices in a moment without toil or care. There is no quarrelsome neighbour, upon whose domains he encroaches; but he marks out the grounds, and carries on his own plan with the greatest diligence and facility: no difficulties appear, but all things work together for his happiness; and in this course he certainly takes great pleasure.

But our opponents may, perhaps, say that there is not so large a portion of time spent in such anticipations, as I would infer:—that most people, after having seen, for a few times, the lamentable downfall of their baseless fabrics, and all their exalted hope blasted in the bud, and after experiencing much weight of affliction, will at length learn wisdom, and lower their expectations; and will then look

back with pleasure to past days of happiness, to the peaceful age of childhood, when no cares intruded upon their harmless sports, but when all seemed thoughtless gaiety and innocent merriment; and they will often, in memory, live over again that "golden age."

Now, that there is actually weight in this objection, it would be almost useless to deny. But still, it is not unanswerable:—For, besides the regret, which will be mingled with such pleasure, it is known from experience and observation that, after all the misfortunes and trials, which are unavoidable in this world, men are still enthusiastic in their anticipations of the future. In the lowest state of misery a gleam of hope will sometimes arise; and after all the storms and clouds of life, the sun will again illumine our path, and happiness will appear in imagination immediately before us.

But we are taking one of the worst cases. Although men never perhaps realise their full expectations, yet they are generally sufficiently successful to encourage their hopes, and keep the imagination exercised in anticipations of happiness yet to come. So that we think our assertion pretty clearly established, that the exercise of the memory, with respect to the past scenes of our lives, is not productive of so large a quantity of pleasure, as the common exercise of the imagination.

But, before our opponents will allow our first proposition that, "the imagination has more pleasurable exercise than the memory," they may possibly assert that, in addition to the exercise of the memory on the past scenes of our lives, it is exercised in the acquisition of knowledge; and that here is a constant fund of pleasure. Now, though it cannot be denied that much of a person's time is spent in the acquisition of knowledge of some kind, and that consequently the memory is much exercised; yet it is questionable, whether the mere exercise of this faculty, without the exercise of other faculties of the mind, be pleasurable. It is certainly pleasant to acquire knowledge; but is not this pleasure derived from the other powers of the mind, rather than from that of memory? Is not this exercise of the memory rather painful?

But granting that there is, contrary to my own belief, some pleasure in this exercise of the memory; still, it cannot be doubted, I think, that similar pleasure is enjoyed by the exercise of the imagination in the same pursuits; so that our first proposition may be said to be pretty well proved.

But, secondly;—The exercise of a cultivated imagination, produces pleasure, which is greater in degree, than the exercise of the memory. In objects of sublimity and beauty, a finely improved intellect, derives more pleasure from imagination in a few

moments, than the memory could furnish in a long time. The soul, elevated by the imagination—

"springs aloft
Through fields of air; pursues the flying storm;
Rides on the volley'd lightning thro' the heavens;
Sweeps the long tract of day;—then high she soars
The blue profound; and hovering o'er the Sun,
Beholds him pouring the redundant stream
Of light; beholds his unrelenting sway
Bend the reluctant planets, to absolve
The fated rounds of Time."

In such exaltation of the mind is pleasure. The world is forgotten, and we seem to have a residence in the heavens, among objects the most sublime and awful. But, in looking through "nature's wide expanse," the imagination fixes upon objects the most beautiful and thus conveys pleasure to the mind. The richly verdant lawn; the variegated grove; the rivulet, as its chrystal waters glide through the sand; the noble river, as it rolls silently along through large intervals, richly bordered with the yearly harvest; fill the mind with feelings of the greatest pleasure. The imagination, that is lively and warm, is constantly discovering beauties in nature, which afford the purest gratification.

Oct. 10*th*, 1822.

DOES A DIFFERENCE IN THE NATURAL CONSTITUTION OF THE MIND OR SOME EARLY PREJUDICE LEAD MEN TO PREFER AND EXCEL IN SOME BRANCHES OF LITERATURE RATHER THAN OTHERS?

The astonishing influence of education in producing an apparent and endless variety of the human character has led many philosophers to impute to this cause alone all our ideas of beauty and deformity, right and wrong, truth and error; and in this way to deny any such thing as conscience, naturally implanted in the breast of man. In the same manner they account for all our attachments; not only for those, which arise from our common intercourse, but also for our attachment to virtue and abhorrence of vice, our predilection for certain branches of literature and any particular pursuit.

According to this doctrine one man may, in like circumstances, with the same advantages, and with the same early prejudices, become an eminent poet, mathematician, astronomer, politician, or orator, as well as another, who does attain to excellence in any of these branches of literature or science. Many plausible arguments may be adduced in support of this theory; but with me the arguments in support of a difference in the natural constitution of the mind very much preponderate.

That some are born poets, others mathematicians, is a position, which evidently appears,—

1st. From their particular cast of mind; from its early developement of peculiar propensities; and from early predilection for certain pursuits. Mr. Stewart says, the difference in different persons in the power of drawing comparisons and making poetical allusions is occasioned by the difference in the liveliness of the conception of objects of sight, which depends upon the strength of the impression, made by material objects. Now no one, who has observed children, will deny, that the beauties of nature are felt much sooner by some than by others. This must arise from the different constitution of their minds. Some children are always thoughtful and silent, while others are voluble and lively. Some very early choose a book, while their companions are at play. Some mechanical geniuses are always scrutinizing works of art, which others value only for their use. These differences, so early discovered, must be made by nature.

But 2dly, men are evidently born with different dispositions and tempers; there is unquestionably a difference in the natural constitution of the animal frame. One man is naturally possessed of a different disposition from another. Some are constitutionally passionate, but quickly appeased; others are not soon excited, but are possessed of very strong, deep passions; some are determined and

inflexible in their measures; others again ar evolatile and turned about by every wind, that blows. These varieties are such, as education never can make. If, as it certainly must be allowed, there is a difference in the constitutions of men, then the intimate relation between the body and mind must make a great diversity of mind.

3dly, Men are possessed of different powers of mind. Some are born ideots; and there are numerous grades of intellect. Can one then excel in any branch of literature as well, as another? Will the ideot continue foolish from original constitution; or can he become as great a poet as Byron, or as great an astronomer as Newton? If not, can those, who are a few degrees more elevated in mind, attain to intellectual eminence? There is then a difference in the natural constitution of men, so great, as forever to keep some in ignorance, while others govern and instruct. No one will say, that he, whose imagination is prevented from exercising itself by the sluggishness of the natural temperament, whose impressions from nature are so faint as to be very soon entirely effaced, and who is consequently without fancy, can make a poet? It is surely needless to multiply arguments to prove what no one can sincerely deny.

May 6th, 1823.

FUTURE PROSPECTS OF OUR COUNTRY.

The question has doubtless often agitated the minds of considerate persons, whether our nation, like those, which have preceded us, is destined to yield her liberty to despots; and, after her appointed time upon the grand theatre of action, to be swept from existence, to make room for new hordes of barbarians?

Like the republics of Greece and Rome, now known only from history and the inimitable works of genius, left for posterity, we have begun with all the feebleness of a state of infancy; and like them, we have been rapidly acquiring strength and wealth. But, while our strength increases from vast accessions of numbers, the hardihood and bravery of individuals are diminished; and the country increases in wealth from the equal distribution of property; luxury raises her claims, and the nation seems fast hastening to that state of lethargy and imbecility, which preceded the destruction of the ancient republics.

Judging from these circumstances alone, we see but little to encourage the patriot or gratify the philanthropist. But let us compare our situation with that of these ancient republics, previous to their subjection to a foreign power. The Greeks and Romans were situated in the midst of unciv

ilized, hardy and courageous barbarians. The nations, that environed Greece, were either lawless savages or rival powers; who, nevertheless, found it impossible to subdue the patriotic and hardy Grecians by any other means, than intrigue. All the superiority, that the civilized then had over the impetuosity of their invaders, consisted in military discipline, which enabled them to oppose a firm, unbroken column, to the desultory attacks of their enemies.

Our circumstances are very dissimilar to those of the Greeks. Our distance from other civilized nations secures us from the invasions of ambitious powers. Neither have we any reason to fear the attacks of such men as those, to whom Rome was compelled to yield her liberty and her existence. Let us become ever so effeminate, it would seem, that we need not fear the tomahawks of the remaining, scattered tribes of savages, who are wandering through our country. Besides, from the efforts now making, we have reason to hope, that the time is not far distant, when the savage shall bury the hatchet and throw away the instruments of hunting for those of agriculture. So that we have nothing to fear, but from ourselves;—and our liberty and national existence can be endangered from ourselves but in two ways. We may yield our liberty into the hands of a despot, or, destroy

ourselves from intestine divisions and wars. We believe no government has ever existed, which has been so well calculated as ours, for the security of the rights of individuals, and the wealth and prosperity of the nation.

In the Grecian republicks we discover many radical defects. The lives and rights of individuals, and the dearest interests of the community, were entrusted to the power of an ignorant mob, who were turned whithersoever an artful orator chose to direct them. In the Roman republick we see the unceasing dissensions between patricians and plebeians, senators and tribunes, which were perpetually disturbing publick peace, and sacrificing the common welfare to the interests of party. But, notwithstanding we find our government from comparison thus superior to every other, yet doubtless, like every other institution of man, it has its imperfections. We cannot watch too carefully over our liberties. They are in some measure exposed to the grasp of artful, unprincipled men. We occasionally find a man, by no means distinguished for decisive integrity and unwavering principles of honor and justice, who nevertheless exerts a powerful influence over the popular feeling; whose vote is sufficient to exclude any man from office, whatever his qualifications may be; and whose support of itself is considered a sufficient claim

for the character of a candidate, to engage the suffrages of a large proportion of the people. He declares himself to be the most devoted patriot, and the warmest friend of the people. So said Bonaparte to the French ; but the issue proved, that he regarded them and their interests no farther, than, they were subservient to his ambitious designs.

Another source of uneasiness many have found in the apparent jealousies, existing and arising between the Northern and Southern States. There is not such a close union of interests between these two sections of our country as could be wished. How far these small differences shall affect the stability of our government, and the happiness of the nation, it remains for time alone to disclose. But the present unfavourable appearances can hardly be considered of sufficient weight to destroy our hopes of the continued prosperity and happiness of our nation.

March 10, 1823.

ON THE REVERENCE, DUE TO ESTABLISHED PRINCIPLES IN THE ARTS.

It may be laid down as a maxim, that he, who begins in the cultivation of the Arts by presuming on his own sense, has ended his studies, as soon as he has commenced them.—*Sir Joshua Reynolds.*

To some persons, who suppose their unrivalled genius, capable of forming a correct judgment on any subject at the first glance, the maxim, which Sir Joshua Reynolds lays down with so much assurance, will very possibly seem merely the result of a dull mind, an assertion incapable of proof, and not founded in reason.

For, say they, how idle it is to suppose, that the masterly genius of a Raphael, or a Michael Angelo is to be chained down, during a long apprenticeship, to the grovelling and servile employment of imitation; to be fettered with the rules of those dull, calculating artists, who have preceded them; doomed to copy with the strictest nicety and most perfect exactness the models of others, till the imagination is destroyed, and the mind enfeebled and rendered incapable of any works of excellence. No, let this be the course of him only, whose dull soul barely enables him to discern the tracks, which genius has before marked out. The flight of true genius is rather retarded, than aided by rules. It needs but a sight of a work of real excellence

to be kindled into enthusiastick emulation, when the powers of the soul are awakened and the imagination labours with vast and noble designs. It is this noble exaltation of mind alone, which produces those inimitable works of art, that force an involuntary expression of approbation from those, who behold them. This enthusiasm of the soul imparts life and spirit to the pencil or the chisel. The hand and the whole person of the artist seem a spirit, which, like the wand of the enchanter, imparts life and soul to the canvass or the marble.

Such is the strain, and such the opinion of many, who think genius the peculiar uncommon gift of the Gods: and as the simple, unlettered founders of the Christian religion were by inspiration, enabled to speak in unknown tongues; so genius, unaided by the rules of art, may produce those works, which shall strike all persons of taste with admiration. But the age of miracles is indeed past. It is now found necessary to pursue a long course of study in order to become acquainted with foreign languages. It is by knowing the style and thoughts of others, that any one learns to write and to think for himself. So he, who begins in the study of the arts must correct his taste, and elevate his imagination by a close attention to, and imitation of, the works of those illustrious artists, who have fixed the standard of taste by the consent of the world.

In the slow progress of the arts, truths have been gradually discovered, and general rules have been established; and he, who disregards these rules, which are the result of the study and experience of ages, places himself in the unsettled and inexperienced situation of those, who first gave birth to the arts. He will eventually feel that he has trusted too much to his own understanding. By these remarks I wish not by any means to favour the idea of some persons, that one must always be in leading strings, must never venture out of the bounds of other artists in search of hidden, undiscovered beauties, but merely to urge the necessity of beginning the cultivation of the arts by studying the models of those, who, universal consent tells us, are men of uncommon genius. He, who doubts the correctness of publick opinion, when he commences his studies, will spend his life in doubt, and never make much attainment The "consentiens laus bonorum," has laid such a sure foundation for the eminence of illustrious artists, that a beginner may, and should, consider their works as models, and not even cherish a doubt of their real excellence. If he does not at first discover their merits, it must be owing to an uncultivated taste, or the want of genius. A close study of them will correct his taste, fire his imagination, and kindle an enthusiasm like that, which the artist himself possessed. It is

then time for him to trust to his own sense; to look into nature and search through her works for genius and beauties, not yet discovered. But still, though he may possess the greatest genius, he will find that much labour and study are requisite for the production of any work, which will command public admiration. The most celebrated artists, and indeed the most celebrated men in every profession, have been distinguished for persevering industry, for unremitting application to their business.

October 7th, 1822.

"WAS AMERICA INHABITED BEFORE THE FLOOD?"

A Forensic Debate.

THE probability, that this country was inhabited, previous to the flood, is granted to my opponent. Considering now the length of time from the creation to this memorable period, when the earth was bereft at once of its inhabitants; and reflecting also upon the great age of the antedeluvians, we cannot doubt that the earth was well peopled; that its inhabitants had become acquainted with the useful arts; that they here erected buildings to shelter themselves from the inclemencies of the weather; and, if we recollect the cause, for which they were destroyed, we shall not think it improbable, that they needed also mounds and fortifications of some kind to protect their lives and rights.

Now the question is whether the remains of forts and dwellings, which are found buried in our country, may not derive their existence from the ancestors or cotemporaries of Noah, before the flood. They are found in the state of Ohio, and extend in a southerly line as far, as the Gulf of Mexico. They are evidently of great antiquity. Remains of buildings, such as hearths and fireplaces, have been brought to light at the depth of six feet below the surface of the earth, which is covered with trees, that from the number of concentrick, annular

rings, are found to be four hundred years old; and from the large decaying trees and other indications, the present is judged to be the third growth. So that we may safely conclude that these remains of antiquity have existed for thirteen or fourteen centuries.

Another fact is ascertained, which proves that the authors of those works were an enlightened people. Two forts are found, which are constructed with the utmost accuracy, after the rules of Geometry. The walls about them are twenty feet high, and there is a ditch about fifteen feet deep. In some of these works have been found what was supposed to be armour, of copper; and various utensils of materials, designed for purposes, unknown to the savages. The nations, who constructed these forts, and walls, were evidently very powerful.

In Perry county, Ohio, is a large stone work, of a triangular form, including upwards of forty acres. There are also pyramids, more than one hundred feet in height. These works are found at the junction of rivers, in eligible situations for towns, where the soil is very fertile.

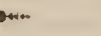
Taking all these facts into consideration, there seems no doubt, that some powerful, civilized nation, many centuries ago, made a permanent settlement here. The question now arises, what

has become of this nation? If they existed before the flood, we can very easily account for their disappearance. But this may not be allowed; and we are consequently told, that the most probable supposition is, that these antiquities were constructed by a nation, who early emigrated from Asia, by crossing Bhering's straits; and that after a permanent settlement of many years, they were at last overcome and entirely destroyed by the ancestors of the existing Indian tribes. And when asked, why the savages are thus ignorant with regard to this nation and the works constantly before them, no other answer can be made, but that it is so long since, that they have perhaps forgotten it. But this is certainly improbable. The contest must have been long and bloody; and is it reasonable to suppose the savages to have entirely forgotten such an event? They can tell us, that their ancestors came from the northwest; but are wholly ignorant of the authors of the works, which they find in their country.

From these circumstances there can be no doubt, that the ancestors of the savages found these works here upon their arrival; and that their origin was as unaccountable to them, as to us. And they must have come here very early, in order to have been so very numerous, when Columbus discovered the country. As there is a total absence of all history

or even tradition with respect to these works, all our reasoning must be mere conjecture; we can only, from such facts as may be collected, judge on which side is the greatest degree of probability.

March 10th, 1823.



[It may be thought by many intelligent readers, that the preceding Essays have but little intrinsic value, either for sentiment or style; and indeed it would be unreasonable to expect in them any such excellencies. But, let it be considered, that their publication is by the particular desire of parental affection, and was the cause of my being solicited to compile this volume. Let it also be considered, that they are the productions of a mind, which had very limited early advantages; that they are only collegiate and juvenile exercises; and that this selection is the best, which I could make from Mr. Morse's manuscripts. When his youth and these other circumstances are taken into view, the "Select Papers" will at least claim the favorable notice of the candid reader, if not the approbation of the discerning critic.]

FUNERAL DISCOURSE.

A

DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED IN ST. JOHN'S CHURCH,

PORTSMOUTH, N. H.

JUNE 26, 1825,

THE SUNDAY AFTER THE DISTRESSING ACCIDENT,

BY WHICH

EDWIN B. STEEVENS, HORACE B. MORSE

AND FIVE OTHER PERSONS

WERE DROWNED.

By CHARLES BURROUGHS,

RECTOR.

Some apology is due for introducing into this volume the following discourse. With no small reluctance is it inserted. Being preached on the Sunday after the calamity, to which it refers, it was of course hastily composed, without the slightest apprehension, that it would be committed to the press. It was afterwards lent to the afflicted relatives of Mr Morse, who were so much interested in its allusion to their severe bereavement, that they earnestly solicited its publication. For their solace and satisfaction, and with the hope that, however humble its pretensions, it may not be without benefit to others, I have been induced to comply with their request. To alter the Discourse, agreeably to my wishes, I must almost make a new one; so that, with the exception of some verbal alterations, I have thought best to print it, as it was delivered.

DISCOURSE.

EXODUS, XXXIII: 4.

WHEN THE PEOPLE HEARD THESE EVIL TIDINGS, THEY MOURNED.

The awful calamity, with which we have been visited the past week, has spread over this town an unusual gloom, and demands a more than common portion of solemn meditation, sympathy and solace. The distressing accents of lamentation and weeping are heard among us. Many are bewailing the loss of dear friends, who have just been suddenly summoned to their long home, and whose places shall know them no more forever.

A few mornings since, parted from our shores those, whose spirits were bright, whose hopes were ardent, and whose auspicious dawning augured to them a long, happy, and useful day of life. Swiftly their boat moved over the waters; and enchanting

was the scenery of nature. No prognostic of evil appeared in the horizon; nothing awakened suspicions of alarm in the bosoms of the happy passengers. But, how little does man know, what a day may bring forth. Happily "heaven hides from all creatures the book of fate, all but the prescribed page" of the present moment. Alas! the noon had scarcely passed, ere God sent a great wind upon the sea; the boat was buried in the waters; and not a passenger has survived to relate the awful disaster. Seven immortal souls were then prematurely, and almost instantaneously carried to their eternal home. They have given up the ghost, and the sun of some of them "hath gone down while it was yet day." Their voyage was the voyage of death, a momentary passage to the unseen world of spirits.

Childhood, and youth, and manhood, then found a watery grave; bright talents were extinguished, just as they began to develop their enchanting power; piety, that breathed forth its ardent devotions from the lips of some of them, utters no more petitions; large intellectual acquisitions are snatched from the world; gentle and amiable tempers, that took delight in gladdening the hearts of others, are withdrawn from gladdening them any longer; frank and benevolent features, that form some of the loveliest objects for admiration and pleasure and the

kindling of goodness, were lost beneath the cold, unpitying wave; the tones of intelligence and friendship and filial fondness are no more heard from their lips; and by their loss some of the dearest comforts of their parents, are torn away. Religion mourns the departure of some of her best children and warmest votaries; education, learning and goodness are become severe mourners; and throughout this place, there cannot be an individual, who is not either directly or indirectly a sufferer on this melancholy occasion.

When the people heard these evil tidings, they mourned. Sadness was on each countenance, and heaviness in each heart. The tenderest sympathies of all were touched; their sensibilities were afflicted by this agonizing intelligence; their bright illusions of pleasure were shaded by the dark clouds of distressing realities; their confidence in life and its charms was shaken; for this tremendous and eloquent calamity seemed to bring nearer to them the certainties of the eternal world.

Yes, my brethren, the last week, seven immortal souls, belonging to this place, sank beneath the rough surge to be seen no more. An experienced pilot, distinguished for bravery and enterprize, with an active youth to assist him in the management of his boat, were unable to elude the fury of the winds and waves, and have reached

"that bourne, whence no traveller returns;" a young man, engaged in trade, with a fair reputation for honesty and good sense, and expecting soon to have formed an union with the object of his affections; two affectionate brothers, in the sunshine of childhood, the hope and pride of their parents; and two of our most valued and valuable instructers, Morse and Steevens, have gone to their father's house beyond the grave, to return to us no more; no more with affectionate voices to greet their friends on earth.

With the last two of those unfortunate persons, whose premature and afflictive death we are called to mourn, I was intimately acquainted. One of them, Mr. Steevens, was our parishioner; and constant was he in his attendance in this temple. Always have his principles been sound, and his character has been amiable; but, within a few months past, he has manifested an increasing interest in the concerns of religion. On the opening of our Sunday School this year, he kindly became a teacher, and engaged in his duties with an ability and zeal, that have been eminently serviceable to us; that have at the same time nourished his own devotion, and strengthened his attachment to the church. As an instructer of youth in one of our largest and most important public schools, he has deserved the highest commendations; and the

sorrow, visible in the features of the children, whom he taught, tell how much they respected and loved him, and how deeply they mourn him.

His countenance always informed you that kindness ruled his heart. His modesty was ever endeavouring to conceal his worth; but his brightly benevolent expression and winning gentleness of manners, most eloquently and justly commanded your good opinion of him, and testified to his purity of principle and tenderness of heart. It has pleased God, for some time past, to try his faith and graces with great weakness of body, and occasional severity of pain; and to add to these sufferings an afflictive solicitude for his infirm and declining parents. Under such indispostion and trials he has recently found it difficult to attend to his various duties. For the restoration of his health, he made an excursion on the water; and, by a mysterious and awful providence, was suddenly and prematurely brought to the termination of his valuable and useful life.

This is a severe blow to our church, already weakened, greatly weakened, by so many removals and losses. The blow is distressingly felt in our Sunday School, where his loss cannot easily be repaired. With him it was a delightful task to be a teacher; and with his children it was happiness to be placed under his instruction. His loss is

great to the cause of education and religion; for he was capable, faithful and affectionate; appearing among his pupils as a father, rather than as a master; engaged for the welfare of their souls, as well, as for their mental improvement. His life was exemplary; and he laboured to know and do his duty, and to live conscientiously, agreeably to the dictates of our holy religion.

His friends were overwhelmed with grief, when they learned that he should return to them no more; when the people heard these evil tidings, they mourned. But how much more afflictive will be this blow to his parents; for it may bring them down with sorrow to the grave. May God, who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, be their support and consolation, and render their tribulation, subservient to their future glory. May our severe loss be repaired; may it be sanctified to us all; especially to the teachers, and children of our school, that they may be quickened to increased diligence and faithfulness in their important labours and duties.

Nor can I forbear to notice at this time with the highest commendation the character of another young person, with whom I have been intimately acquainted from his first residence in this town; a youth to letters and to virtue dear, who has been suddenly summoned to his God by this recent dis-

aster. I allude to Mr. Morse. Such ardour for intellectual and moral attainments, such sincere and active piety, such fidelity in the discharge of his duties, such eminent qualifications as a teacher, such manliness and ingenuousness of mind, such filial devotion, as formed the combined excellencies of his character, are very rare. In all, that he did, his heart was warmly and most energetically engaged. For his classical taste and acquirements, his admirable talent at stimulating the minds of his pupils, at inspiring them with a love for learning, at advancing them rapidly and thoroughly in their various studies, and at preserving discipline, while he secured affection, he was entitled to the very first rank among classical teachers. The examinations of his school always reflected upon him the highest credit and honour.

Most industriously did he employ the hours, that were not occupied in his school, in the pursuit of general knowledge, or in gathering instruction for his intended ministerial life; for labour was his pleasure. Even Sunday was no day of rest to his energies; "it shone no Sabbath day to him"; for, after attending in the first part of the morning to the Sunday School of his church, as its devoted superintendant, he walked to New Castle; performed devotional services, and read sermons in the meeting house there in the forenoon and afternoon,

established and took charge of a Sunday School in that place; and then walked home in the evening. He was attentive to all the religious meetings of his own parish; and, whenever it was proper, gladly assisted in some of the services. Had his desire of becoming an ambassadour of Christ been granted, he would doubtless have appeared a burning and a shining light, and have reflected lustre upon letters, religion and society. It seems inexplicable to us, that such "excellency should go away;" that such bright virtues should be so soon eclipsed; that, while we looked for the fruition of such blessed promises, the bolts of heaven blasted them, scattered desolation over our path, and filled our hearts with dismay.

The two instructers, of whom we have spoken, had a warm personal attachment to each other; were educated at the same College; were in the same class; followed similar pursuits; entertained similar views; and lived together, as brothers. "They were lovely and pleasant in their lives; and in their deaths they were not divided." Though called early from this vale of tears, they were old in righteousness, and had diligently improved the days of youth in their master's work. They lived by faith in Christ. That faith doubtless prepared them for their unexpected visit from the Son of man, and has caused devout men to make great lamentation over them.

Nor have their influence and usefulness terminated with their lives. "Being dead they speak;" they speak from their watery graves. Though the great author of their being has "made them up amongst his jewels," their exemplary lives will a long time shed a salutary radiance; their admonitions and instructions may never be forgotten; the children of their care may have derived from them a legacy of inestimable value, that may secure for them the atoning merits of Christ, and open for them the gates of glory. Their awful and sudden departure too may produce religious impressions, that never can be erased; for it proclaims to us by the most solemn realities, that our foundation is in the dust, and that religion constitutes the only true happiness of life, and furnishes the only proper preparation for death. This calamity and its circumstances will be registered in the history of the town, as one of the dark visitations of God, to warn and improve the generations of future times; and may stand, as a pillar of cloud, to guide many to the heavenly Canaan, the haven of eternal rest.

We have said that it was a very mysterious nd inexplicable visitation of God, in calling away so unexpectedly the fellow beings, whose loss we now deplore; in snatching from us friends, who were so young and precious; and in filling so many hearts with sadness. But our faith in his character tells us

that these mysteries of wo never eclipse his mercy; that ever shines the most radiant of his attributes. Calamity seems a dark strange page to the sceptical and immoral; but to the submissive christian all its characters are bright, legible, and intelligible. Our imperfect judgments measure events by the scanty line of human reason, and proportion them to the brief limits of human life. God determines them all by infinite wisdom and proportions them for eternity. His perfect government has relation to endless consequences, to infinite good.

Nothing then should be deemed strange to us, when we contemplate the omniscience, that judges all things, and the infinite love, by which Deity is actuated. This recent overwhelming calamity has accomplished some of his most benevolent purposes. His designs with the individuals, whom he has called away, in relation to their connexion with this earth, were completed; and their decease was the fittest time for their departure, in the determination of divine wisdom. His eyes watched over them on the deep; his ears were open to their cries; he was with them in their wo, riding on the surges of the ocean; his mercies were not withdrawn in the hour of peril: the spirit of Jesus comforted those, who looked to him, and said amidst the hurricane of terror, "peace, be still: it is I; be not afraid." Through his wisdom and

mercy were they removed to the unseen world; for he holds the ocean in the hollow of his hand; he can calm the mightiest tumults of the deep; not a sparrow falls to the ground without his permission; and even the hairs of your head are all numbered. God was present at the death scene, now so terrific to our imaginations; and divine love brooded upon the waters. Each of those suffering creatures was compelled at some time to pass through the valley of the shadow of death; the moment, when they perished, was in the divine counsels, the most eminently merciful, wise, and salutary. God there rode upon the waves and proclaimed his majesty, wisdom and mercy. His subsequent proceedings will compensate this loss and make it a fertilising source of growth in religion. Blessings and consolations too shall follow, where the rod of affliction has been felt; and sweeter shall be the solace, where his chastisements have been most severe.

The evil tidings, which now call us to mourning, are nothing less, than God speaking to us by facts, by the sensible operations of his providence. He is speaking to creatures, who have too much and too long resisted the gentle and ordinary course of his government; he now so speaks, as almost to compel us to hear the wonders of his grace, and reverence the mysteries of redeeming love. *We*

are worms of the dust, sinful, dependent, and helpless beings. *He* is infinitely glorious in all his attributes, and demands our most perfect homage, obedience, and love. He created us in his goodness, to imitate his holiness, and to be the instruments of his beneficence. His word enlightens our path, and his spirit helps our infirmities. His own Son was sent to redeem and save us, and make us heirs of eternal glory.

With all these schemes of infinite love, one would suppose, that when God looked upon the world, he would find it fulfilling his purpose, and moving in those paths of purity and love, where his own footsteps are seen. But how different and depraved is the real condition of society. The immortal spirits, that we behold around us, more frail and perishing than the morning flower, are in bondage to the cares and pleasures of this life; blessed with the overtures of salvation through the blood of Christ, they are living without piety and holy gratitude; candidates for heaven, they are the votaries of the world and lovers of sensuality. The bible is made free, as the air we breathe; the ministers of Jesus are "in season and out of season," calling men to faith and holiness. The Spirit of God is constantly breathing its calm and sweet influences over the human mind.

Yet men will not regard these things. God is then induced to speak by facts; by operations that strike the mind irresistibly, and inflict a blow that is both heard and felt. It is to alarm our insensibility, love of life, delusive visions, neglect of devotion, and forgetfulness of Christ, that he has now sent on us such a tremendous dispensation. Have preachings, admonitions, and meditations ever made upon your minds such impressions of the uncertainty of life, as when your ears heard the evil tidings of the sudden sinking of the boat, that contained so many precious and immortal beings, with whom you have been acquainted? Were you ever so sensibly convinced as now, by the force of this calamity, that the hand of God is always over you, and that you are preserved each moment by his miraculous interposition? Did you ever feel more powerfully the infinite importance of being always in readiness for death? Did you ever more satisfactorily realise the blessed influences of our holy religion, which clearly explains the mysterious workings of providence, supports us under the severest bereavements, and leads us through tribulation to the kingdom of God?

It is criminal then in us not to be greatly improved, as well as solemnized, by the voice of Deity, which from the depths of the ocean now loudly reproves our impenitence and irreligion. We can-

not obtain his favor without holiness and the firmest reliance on our Redeemer's merits; and we must immediately seek for such graces, if we intend that God shall not speak to us in vain. This may be his last call of mercy, that shall reach our ears. The next sound may be that of the trumpet of the archangel, summoning us to the sentence of eternal wo.

Admonitions, of the most impressive kind, are by this calamity proclaimed to the young. The two instructers, whose loss we deplore, were eminent for their religious, and moral worth. When suddenly called to give an account of their stewardship, their loins were girt, and they were found watching,and ripening themselves for the kingdom of glory. How ardently do I wish that many such young persons were to be found; for then would the cause of religion flourish. But there is a lamentable want of piety among our youth; and rare are the instances of those, who early dedicate themselves to God. Unless something shall be done, such a state of things will be followed by a rapid deterioration of morals, and forbodes tremendous desolation to our land.

These evil tidings, that have clothed our countenances with sorrow, call loudly to the young to begin their work of holiness. Though bright to them be their morning; though the sea of life, on

which they are embarked, may be enchanting; though nature may smile around them in the richest loveliness; yet their bark floats upon a treacherous wave, which the next moment may roll over their lifeless bosoms. What would be your feelings, if you, who are so young and confident, should be suddenly called before the judgment seat of the Son of God? What is the record of your life, and what have you done for the divine glory? Young or old, God expects you to fulfil his work, and to be found in the way of piety. Look into your bosoms and ask conscience, what would probably be your destiny, were your remains now resting in the cold earth, or in the dark, "unfathomed caves of ocean?" Do the spirits of those, whom we now mourn, regret that they lived by faith on the Son of God; that they cherished devotional tempers; that they passed their sabbaths in the sanctuary, and in prayer; that they employed their time and talents in Sunday Schools; and imprinted on young and tender minds the gracious doctrines of the Gospel, by which they were to be guided safely through a world of temptation to the abodes of heaven? Oh, no! their spirits are rejoicing at the performance of such holy offices. Their only regret is that *all* was not given to Christ. Perhaps too, fresh accessions of joy are momently gathering on them in heaven, from witnessing the salutary

influence of their holy exertions, and from beholding multitudes turning to Jesus, through their spiritual efforts, while living.

Let the young now remember their Creator. Let them consider how vast are their duties and obligations; how suddenly they may be called away; and what precious and eternal benefits they may yet confer on the world. For how extensive is the efficacy of a good example; how glorious to Jehovah is the spectacle of the young, consecrating their talents, time, affections, and all their powers, at the altar of piety; how delightful is it to the mind and the heart to live or die in the faith of the Son of God.

Loudly do these solemn events address themselves to the unbelieving and thoughtless, who form a large, painfully large portion of the community; and who should submissively "hear this rod, and Him who has appointed it." Let them now learn on what a frail tenure life is held; that youth, genius, piety, worth, brightness of spirits, peace and competence, cannot exempt any from destruction; that the feet of those, who shall carry us out, may be waiting at the door; that, ere another sun, we may be tenants of "the house appointed for all living; that in a moment, our brightest hopes may be overshadowed, our plans blasted, and our eyes closed in death. Who can control the infinitude of

accidents, that await us? Consider too what momentous consequences will follow this fleeting scene—infinite enjoyment or infinite wo.

Ponder solemnly on these things, you, who are sceptical, irreligious and careless. Suppose that you were in the condition of those, whom you mourn; that the waves were rolling over your lifeless remains; that your spirits with all their imperfections were before the throne of God: could you reasonably expect divine mercy? Can a being of infinite holiness esteem those, who have lived in contempt of him, have contaminated his vineyard with vice, have brought confusion over his works and misery on his creatures? Could you justify yourselves for despising public worship; for living without prayer, without an acknowledgment of the infinite mercies of Christ, without religious gratitude; and for leaving behind you the eternally pernicious influence of a corrupt example? Would there be any thing in your irreligious course, that could afford you complacency in the eternal world? Oh no; be warned by these tidings. Praise God that you are not already consigned to perdition, and that the day of life and grace is still spared to you. Be warned by these tidings, that you come not into the place of torment. Call immediately upon your God. Look with penitence and a holy and firm trust to that mighty Jehovah, who alone is worthy

of your esteem, adoration, love and obedience; to that Spirit, by whom alone you can be renewed and sanctified; to that Redeemer, who only can confer on you pardon, and receive you to glory.

These tidings moreover address with the most solemn efficacy the serious and holy. What new and powerful inducements are now furnished to them to love their Redeemer better; and what encouragement to virtue is given them by the precious memory of the just. How confidently can they commit to their Saviour the spirits of the pious friends, whose decease they mourn; and cherish the belief that their departure was a happy release from a vale of tears, from a scene of severe trial; and that they have found a glorious admission to Him, "whose presence beams eternal day;" whom they have earnestly desired to see; and whose radiance and beauty infinitely transcend all the enchanting pictures of him, that imagination might have formed. As they have now left God's vineyard on earth, the field of christian activity and usefulness, a larger duty remains for us to perform. Be so much the more diligent; and earnestly press forward for the immortal prize.

We are all exhorted, my brethren, by these sad tidings to be also ready for the summons of death; for, "in such an hour, as we think not, the Son of man cometh." How little did those unfortunate

beings, whom we mourn, think that the Son of man was coming, when they embarked upon the waves; and how happy was it for those, who were ready and found watching. Our own dissolution may be near and sudden, however thoughtless and confident we seem. Consider then how numerous and vast are the duties, which we are required to perform; how holy and exemplary we should be to secure the favour of Christ; how much we should pray, and struggle against the tyranny of our passions and wills, and be conversant with the holy word of God; how great should be our reverence for the Sabbath and the christian ordinances; how perfect should be our love for our heavenly father; how ardent should be our benevolence towards our fellow men; how deep and sincere should be our humility and penitence for our transgressions; how firm should be our trust in the atoning blood of Christ; how pure and holy should be our consciences; how devout should be our meditations on death; and how thorough should be our preparation for the scenes of eternity. For we are all, my brethren, soon to meet Christ, the Son of God, the eternal Judge of the world; and are soon to hear the sentence, that shall seal our destiny forever. We know not when he will come. To all he will come unexpectedly, come when he will; and the perils of a tremendous retribution hang over deferred

repentance. Death strikes awfully around us. "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed." Let us duly estimate and improve the privilege of existence, and the much greater privileges, offered by Christ; the privileges of being saved by his blood and made heirs of glory.

But I must pause, and leave these evil tidings to the serious meditation of your own minds. Your good sense, tender sympathies, and devotional feelings will surely extract from this calamity more spiritual profit, than this discourse can produce. The dispensation, that bows us down with so much sorrow, must surely make you better, apart from any description of this tale of wo, or any religious exhortation. I leave its pathetic and eloquent instructions with the spirit of God, to accomplish their merciful design and salutary influence on you and on this town. I trust that your serious and holy impressions will not be transient or feeble; that this solemn season of sorrow will be the returning of the soul to God; that these pathetic meditations will correct our hearts; and that our abstinence from frivolity and irreligion will lead to the formation of holy habits. I hope and most fervently pray that the divine voice, which now so loudly cries that "all flesh is grass," will make us feel our vanity and impotence; and induce us to reverence that word, which abideth forever; and to love that Re-

deemer, who can calm not only the stormy ocean, but all the sorrows of our hearts; who can admit us to that heaven, where sorrow and death shall never come; where these earthly tribulations shall render our felicity more exquisite and glorious, and rank us among that happy multitude, "who shall have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."